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SUPERMAN®

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THE NEW 52!

THE RETURN
OF THE
PHANTOM KING!

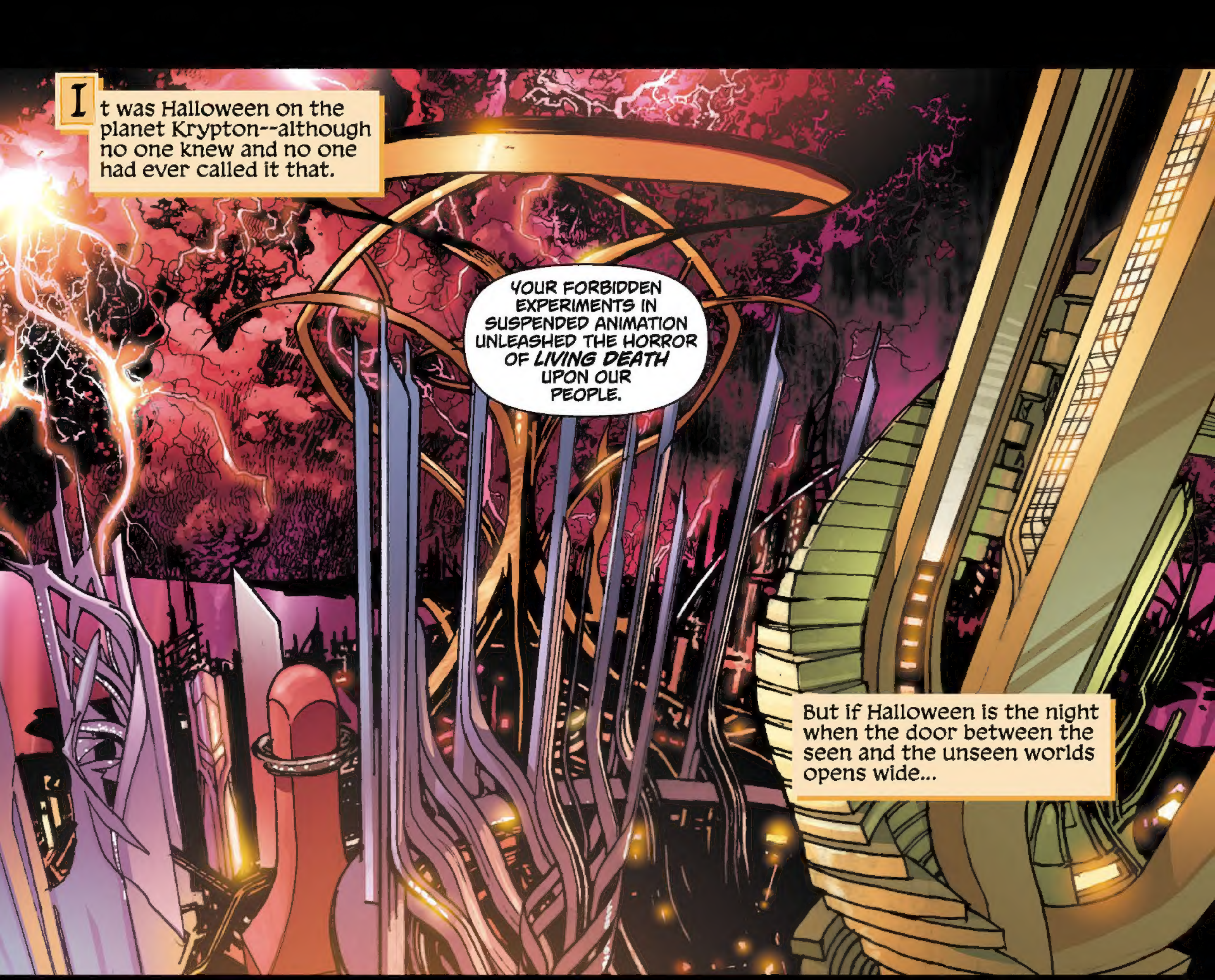


GRANT
MORRISON
TRAVEL
FOREMAN

DCCOMICS.COM

RATED T TEEN

DEC. 2012



It was Halloween on the planet Krypton--although no one knew and no one had ever called it that.

YOUR FORBIDDEN
EXPERIMENTS IN
SUSPENDED ANIMATION
UNLEASHED THE HORROR
OF **LIVING DEATH**
UPON OUR
PEOPLE.

But if Halloween is the night
when the door between the
seen and the unseen worlds
opens wide...

Then that
night was
Halloween
on Krypton.

AS A **CONSEQUENCE**,
SUSPENDED ANIMATION WILL
NO LONGER BE **PERMITTED**,
EVEN AS A MEANS OF
SUBDUING **SOCIOPATHS**
SUCH AS YOURSELF.

THUS, YOUR
OWN ACTIONS HAVE
COMPELLED US TO
SANCTION A **NEW KIND**
OF **PUNISHMENT**.

WHAT **IS**
THIS?

THIS, DOCTOR
XA-DU, IS THE
DOORWAY TO THE
PHANTOM
ZONE.

WHERE YOU
WILL NO LONGER NEED
TO **EAT** OR **BREATHE**,
AND WHERE YOU WILL
NEVER AGE.

WHERE EVERY
20 YEARS YOU
WILL BE GIVEN THE
OPPORTUNITY TO
PLEAD FOR
RELEASE.

THE
SENTENCE IS
TOTAL PHYSICAL
DEMATERIALIZA-
TION.



UNTIL SUCH TIME
AS YOUR CASE IS **REVIEWED**,
YOU WILL BE LESS SUBSTANTIAL
THAN A **THOUGHT**.

SO THINK UPON
YOUR **CRIMES** WHEN THERE
IS **NOTHING ELSE** TO
THINK ABOUT.



NO, THIS
ISN'T **FAIR!**

**THIS ISN'T
JUSTIFIED!**

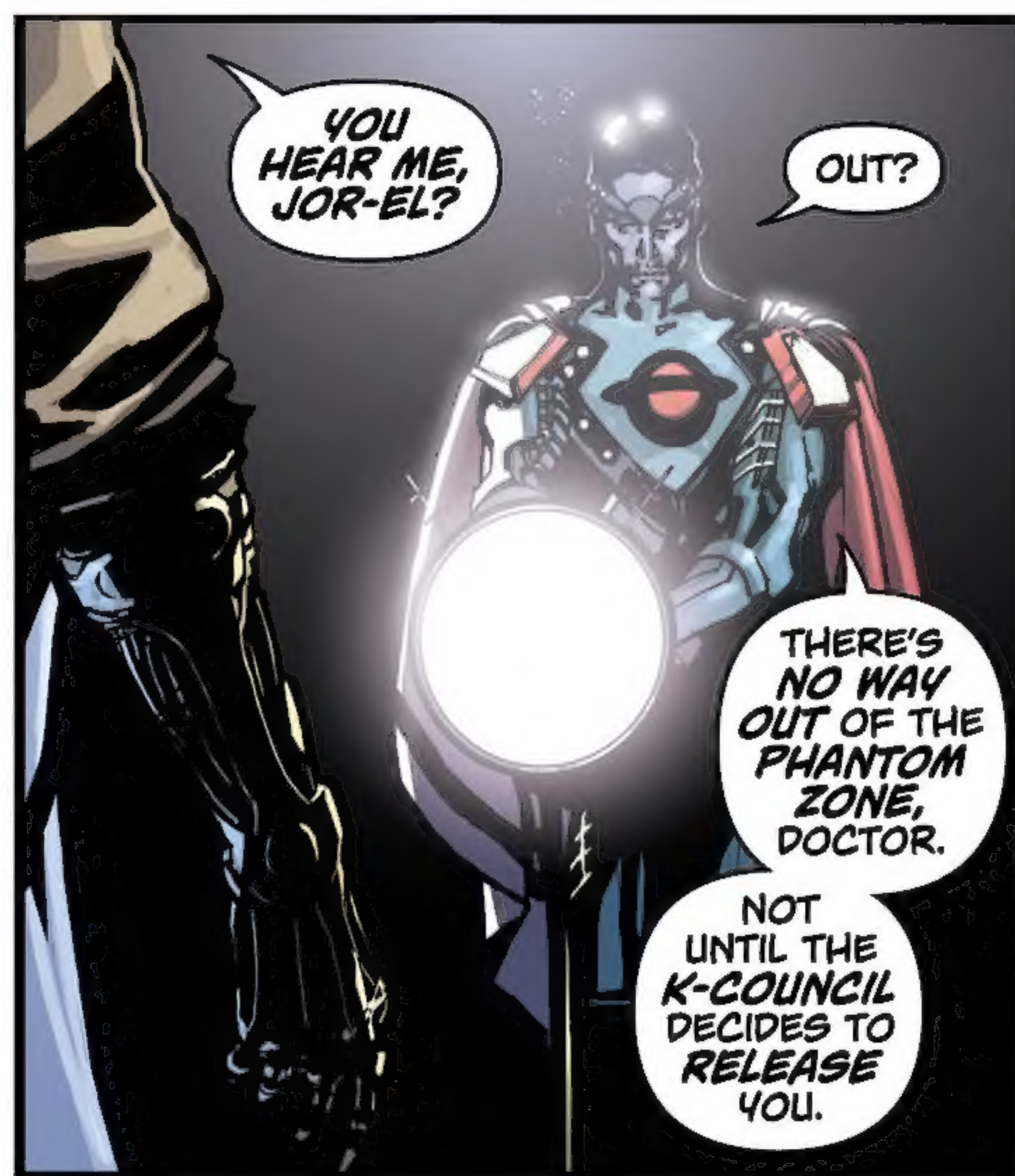
YOU'LL ALL
PAY FOR THIS
PERVERSION OF
JUSTICE!



**ESPECIALLY
YOU.**

WHEN I
GET **OUT** OF
THIS, I'LL SHOW
YOU ALL!

YOU
AND YOUR
FAMILY.



YOU
HEAR ME,
JOR-EL?

OUT?

THERE'S
NO WAY
OUT OF THE
PHANTOM
ZONE,
DOCTOR.

NOT
UNTIL THE
K-COUNCIL
DECIDES TO
RELEASE
YOU.



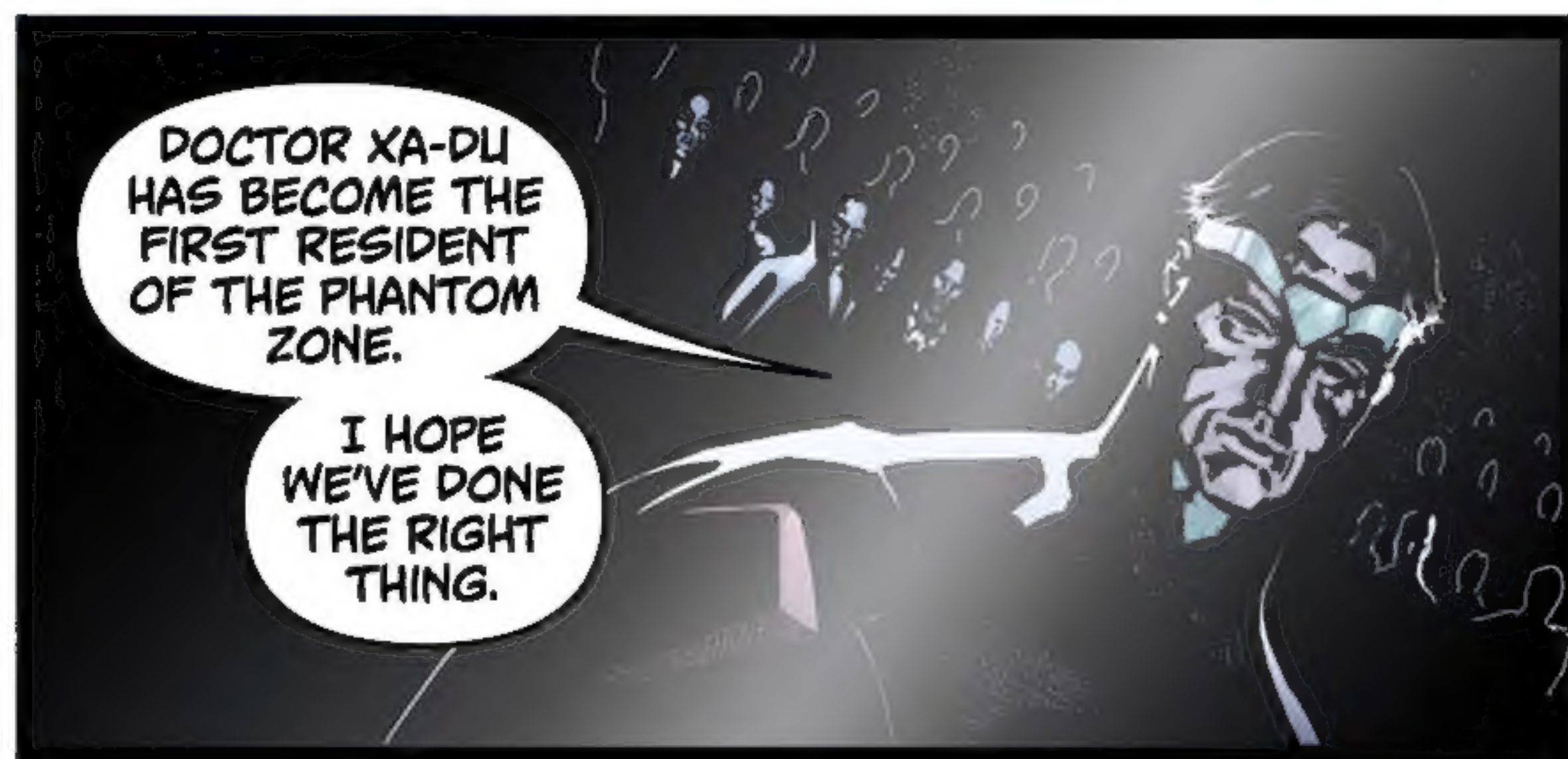
NO.

YOU SAID IT
YOURSELF, WHEN
YOU DEFEATED THE
MULTITUDE'S
INVASION OF
KRYPTON.

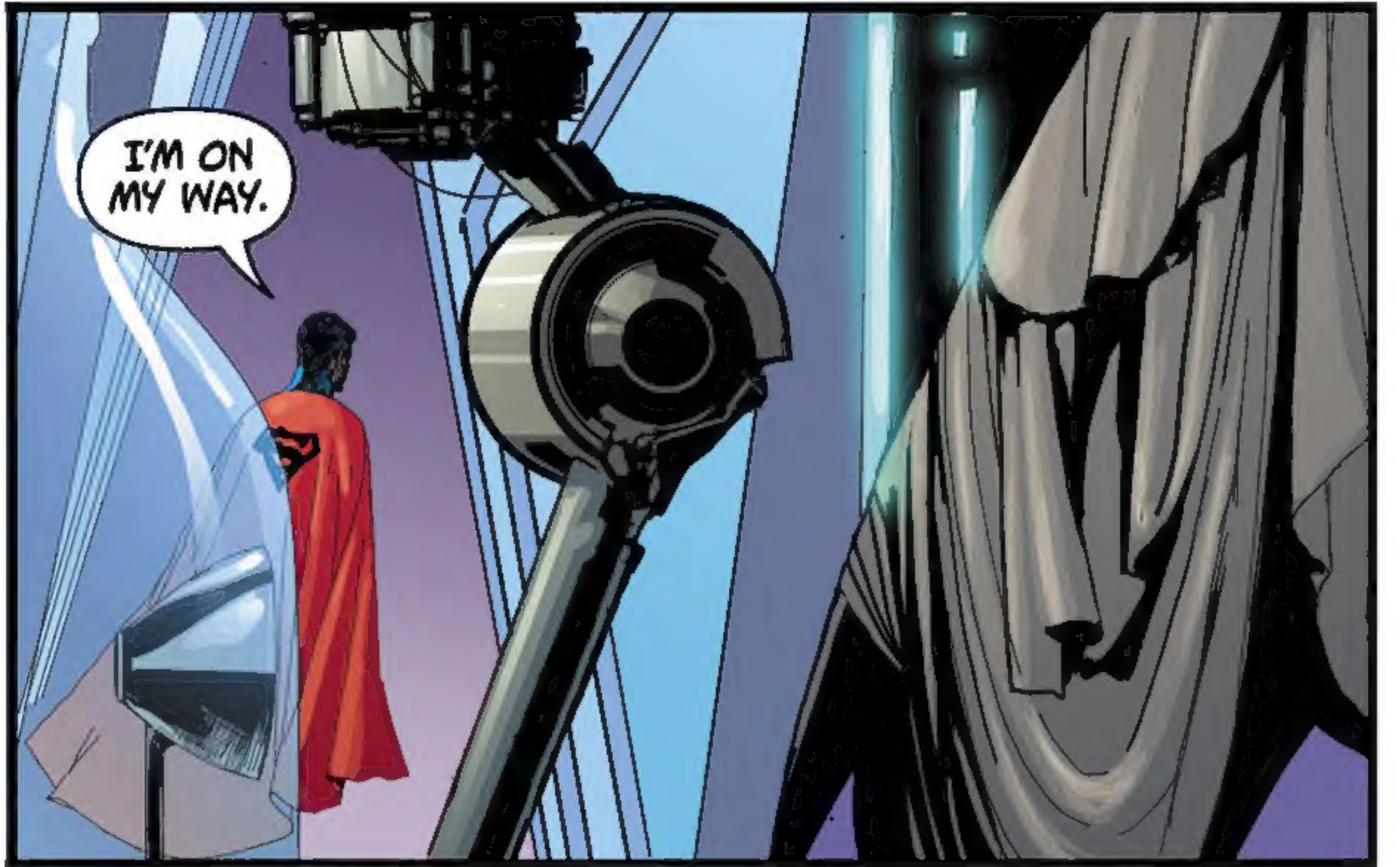
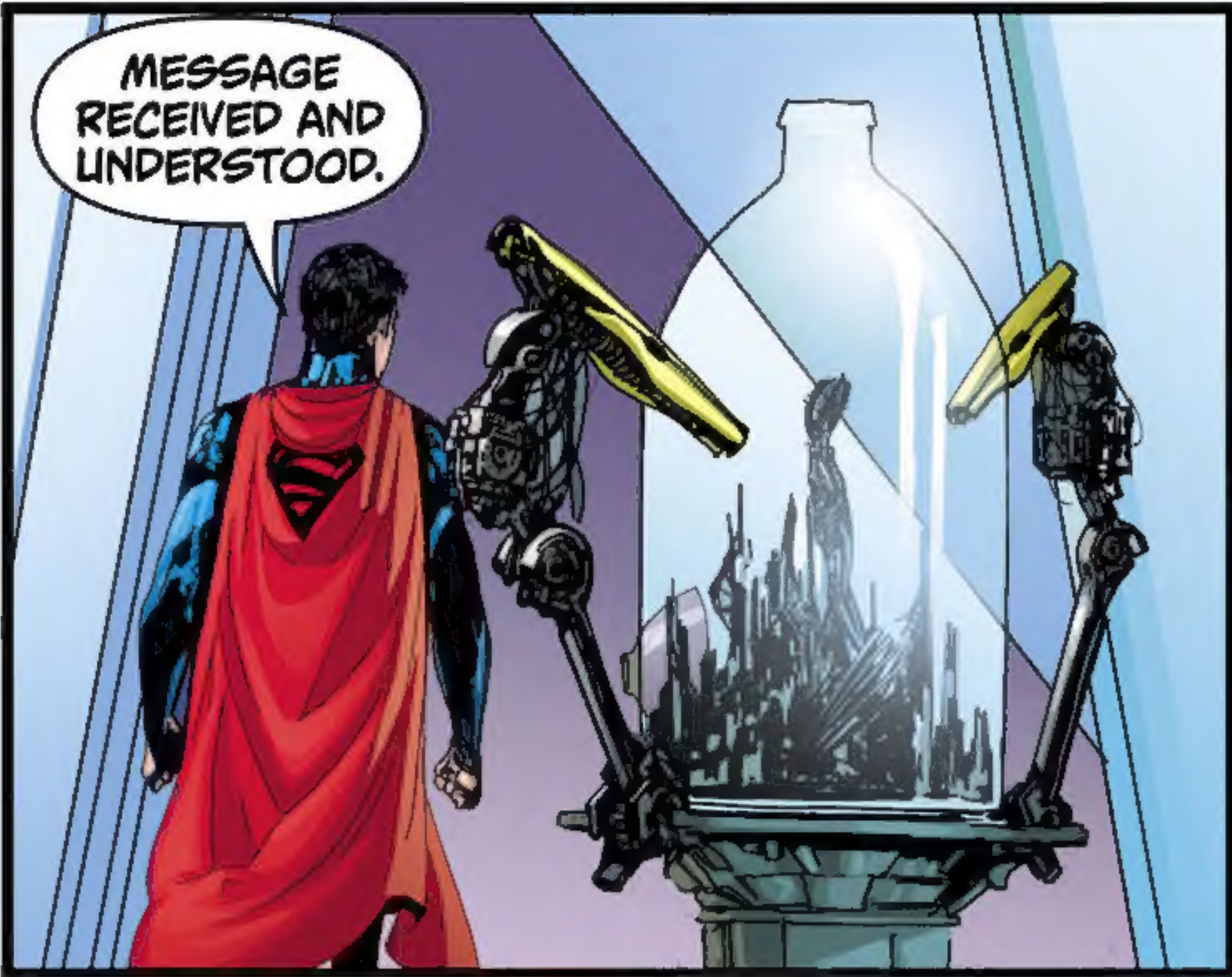
THERE'S
ALWAYS
A WAY,
JOR-EL.



NOT THIS
TIME.

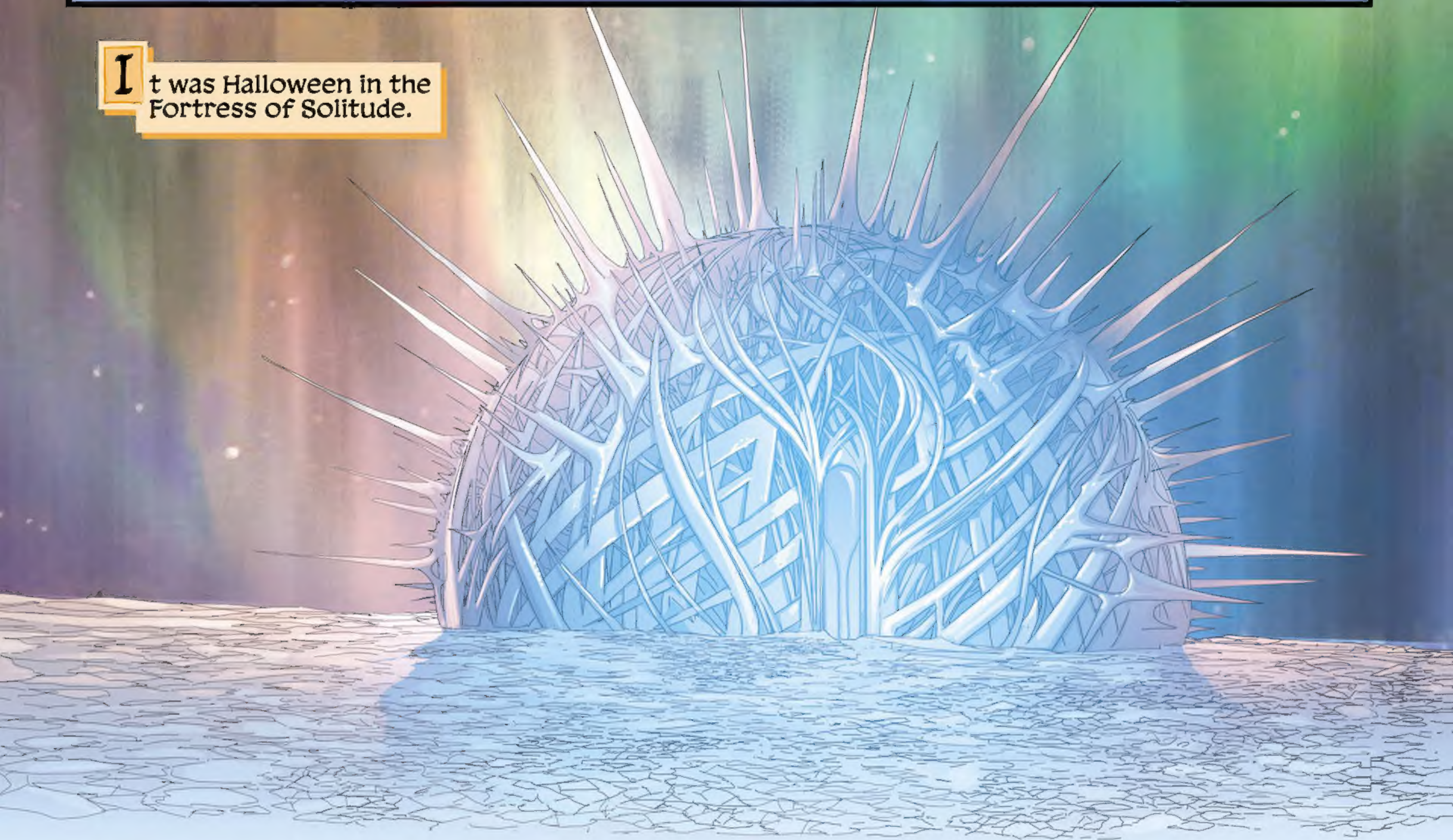


Twenty years later, on the day of Doctor Xa-Du's first parole hearing, the planet Krypton exploded.





It was Halloween in the Fortress of Solitude.



Trick or treat, Superman.

YOU
HAVE BEEN
JUDGED,
KAL-EL!

JUDGED
FROM
BEYOND THE
GRAVE!



THE **GHOST** IN THE **FORTRESS** OF SOLITUDE

GRANT MORRISON WRITER

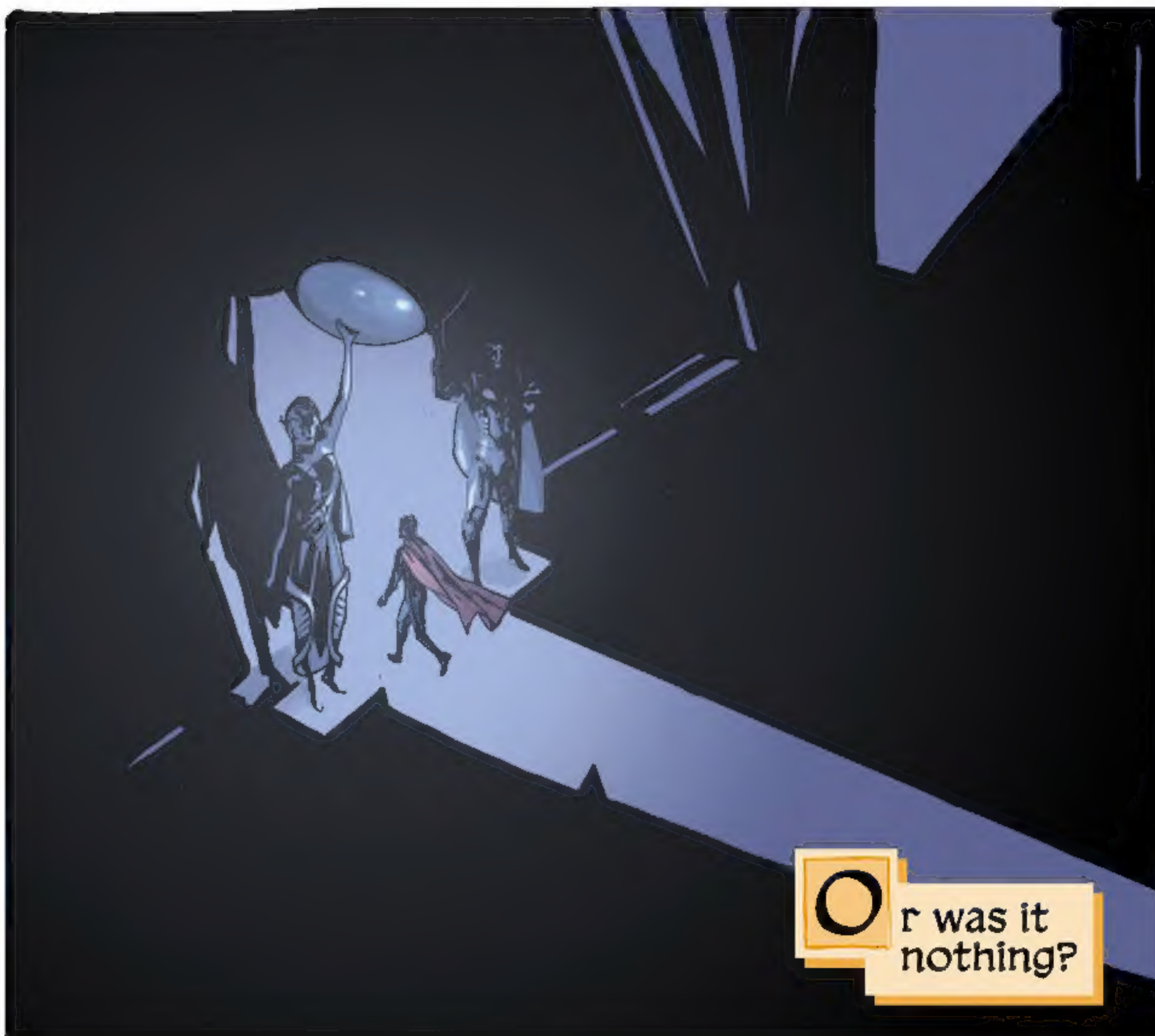
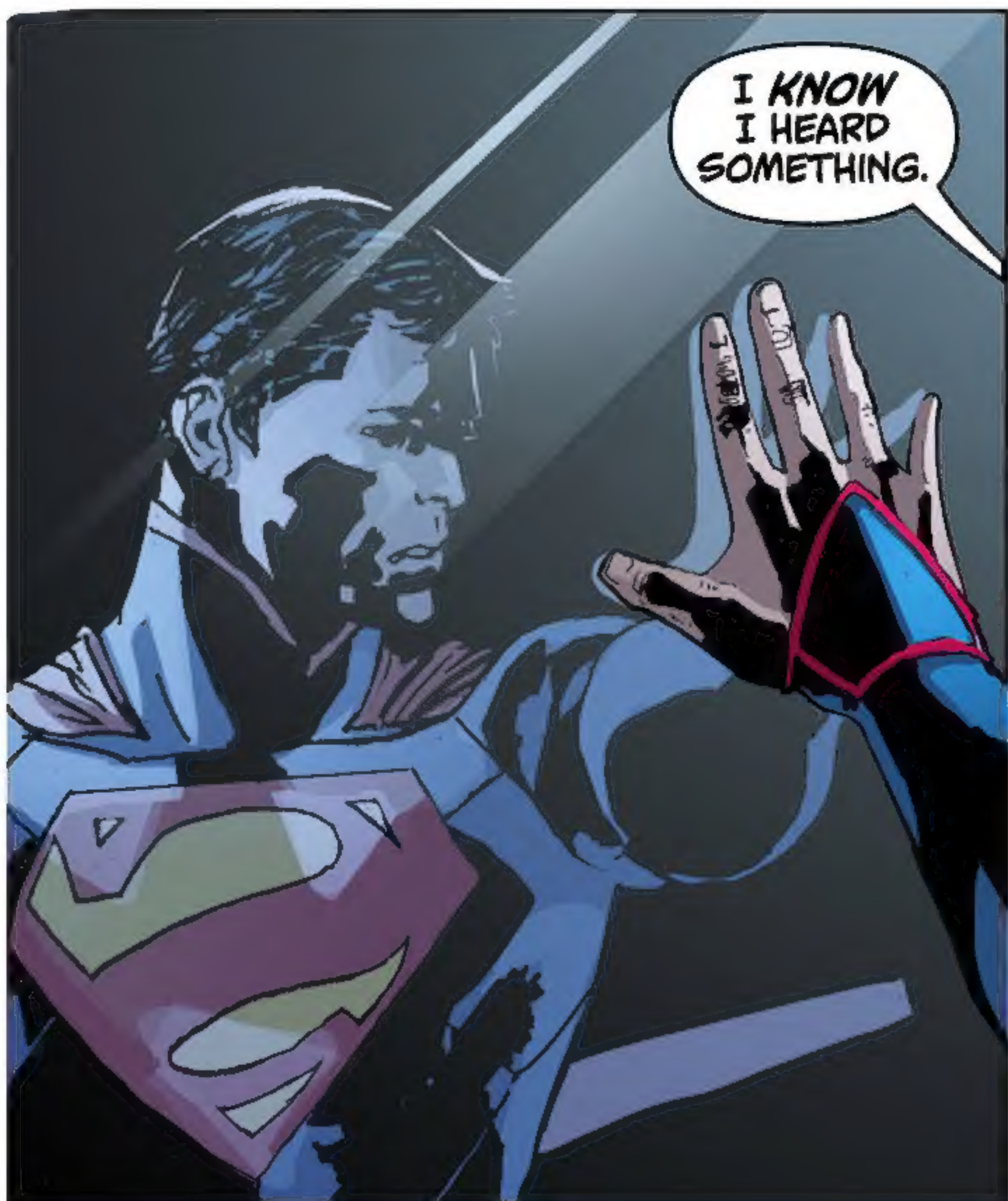
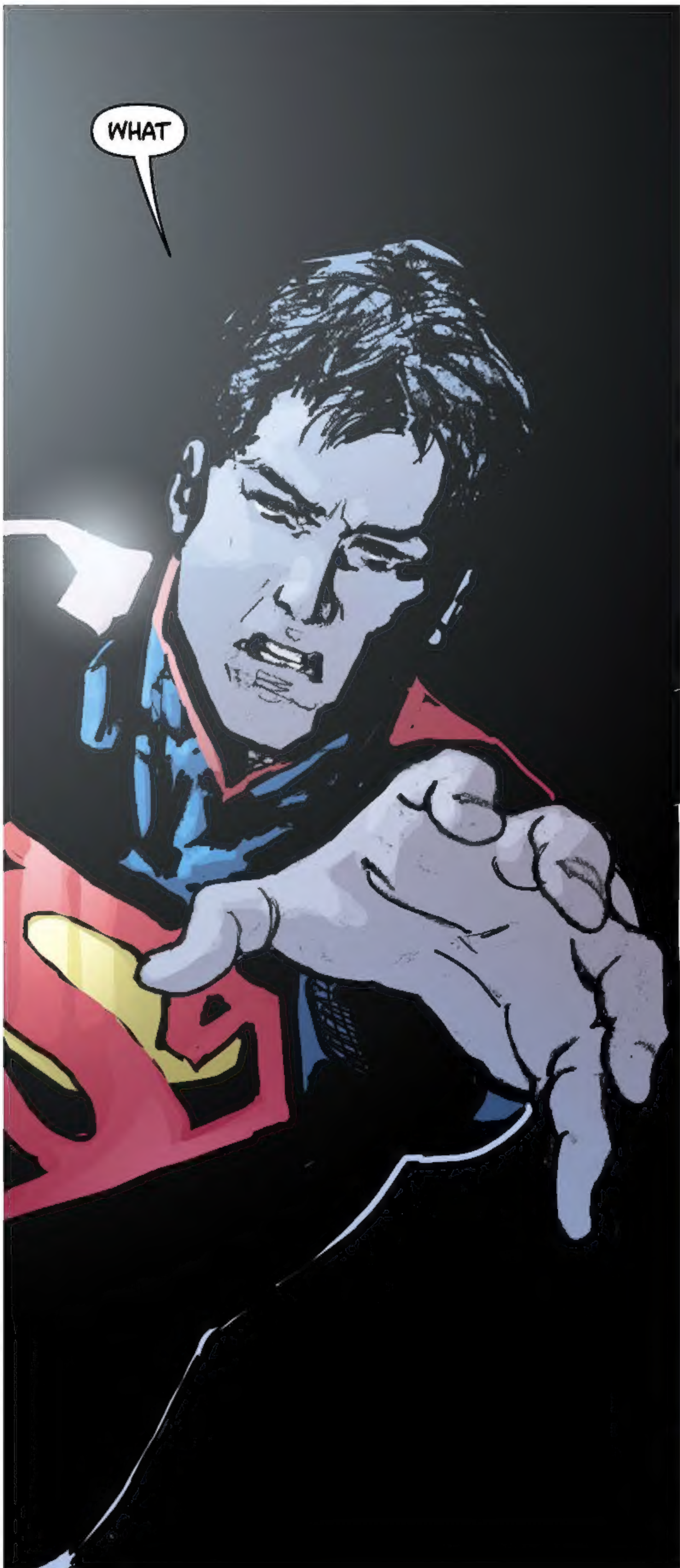
TRAVEL FOREMAN ARTIST **BRAD ANDERSON** COLORIST **STEVE WANDS** LETTERER

BRYAN HITCH & DAVID BARON COVER **RAGS MORALES & ANDERSON** VARIANT COVER

WIL MOSS ASSOCIATE EDITOR **MATT IDELSON** EDITOR

SUPERMAN CREATED BY **JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER**

DEDICATED TO THE GREAT RAY BRADBURY

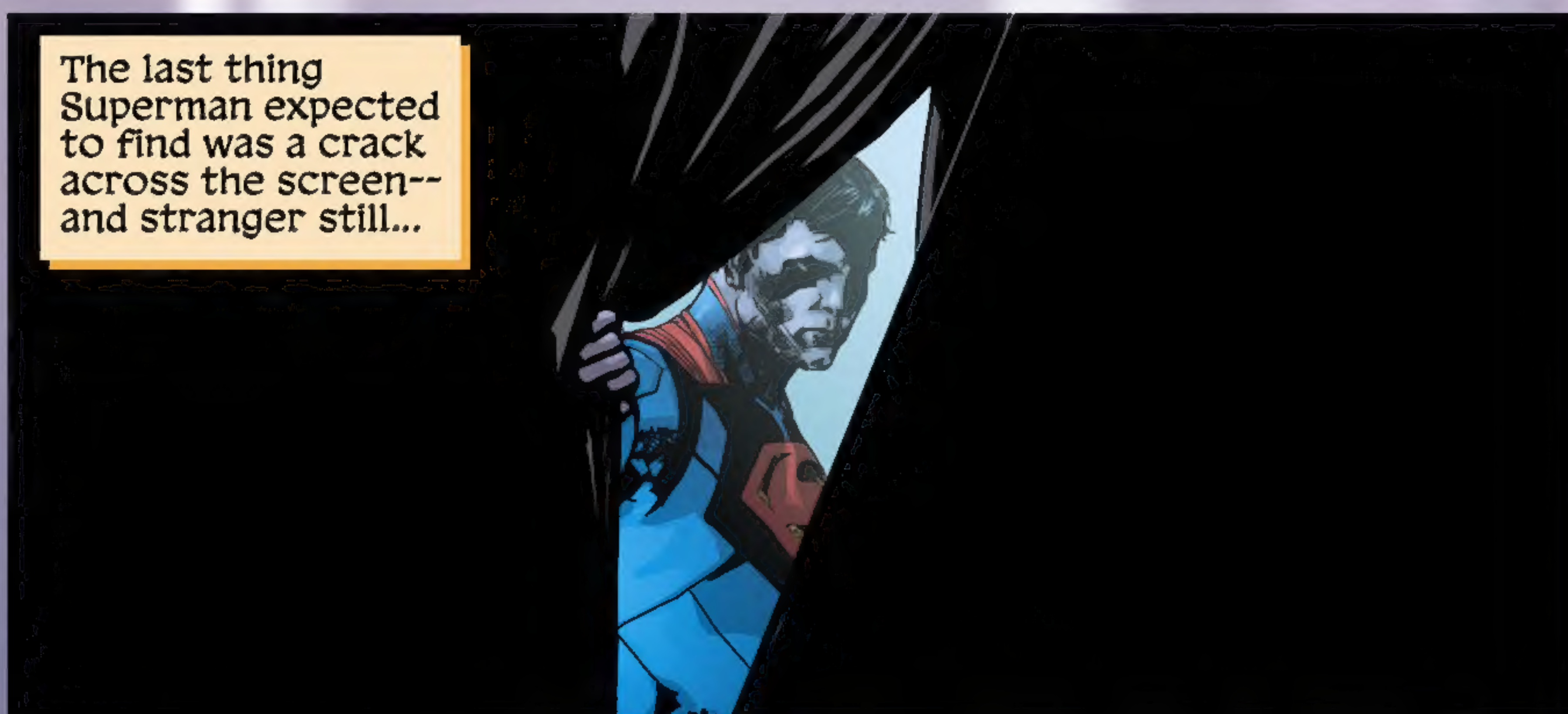


Nothing but the circuit-buzz of cryptic technology from a gone world.

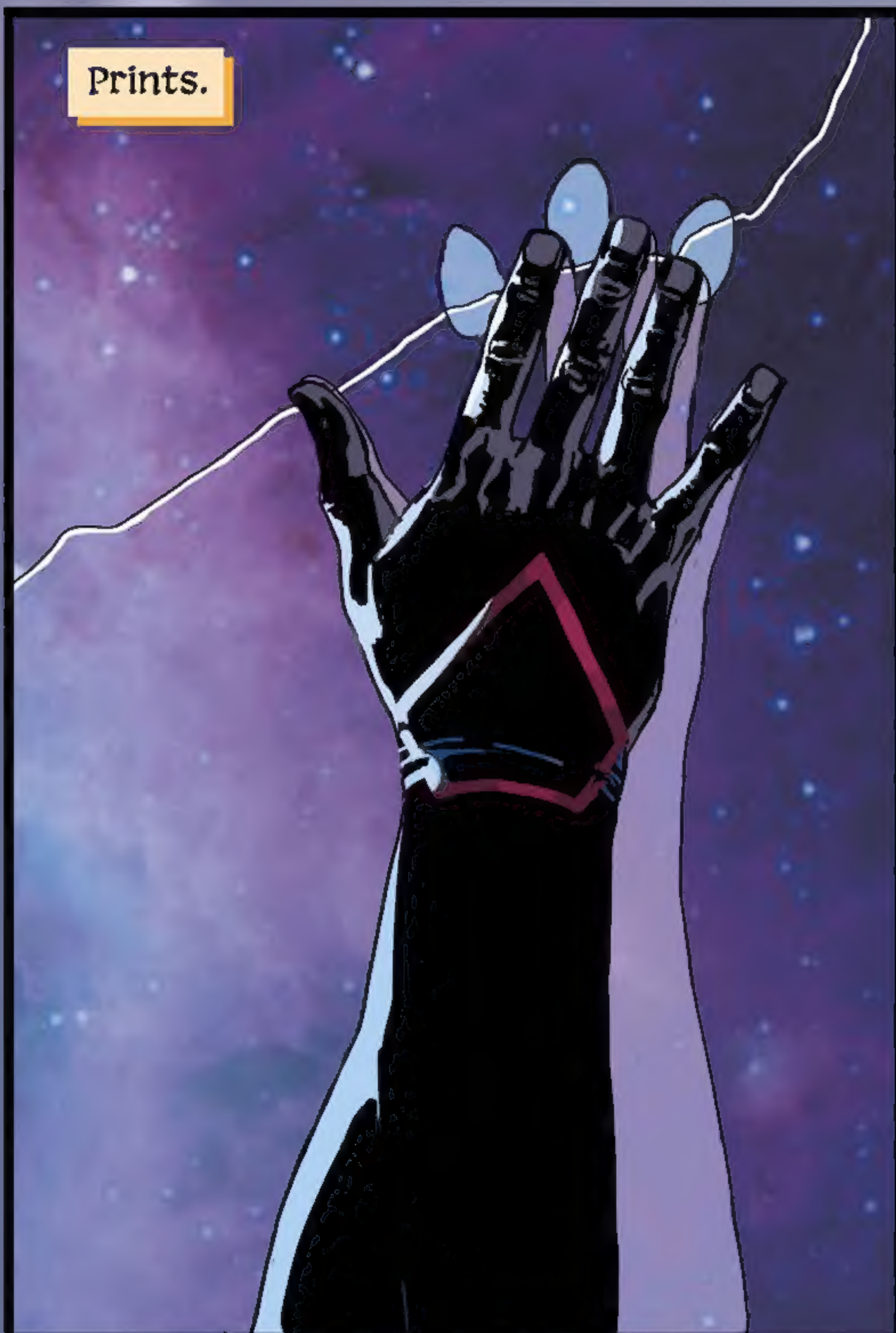
He'd retrieved the apparatus from Kandor a year previously but so far had only guessed at its function.



The last thing Superman expected to find was a crack across the screen-- and stranger still...

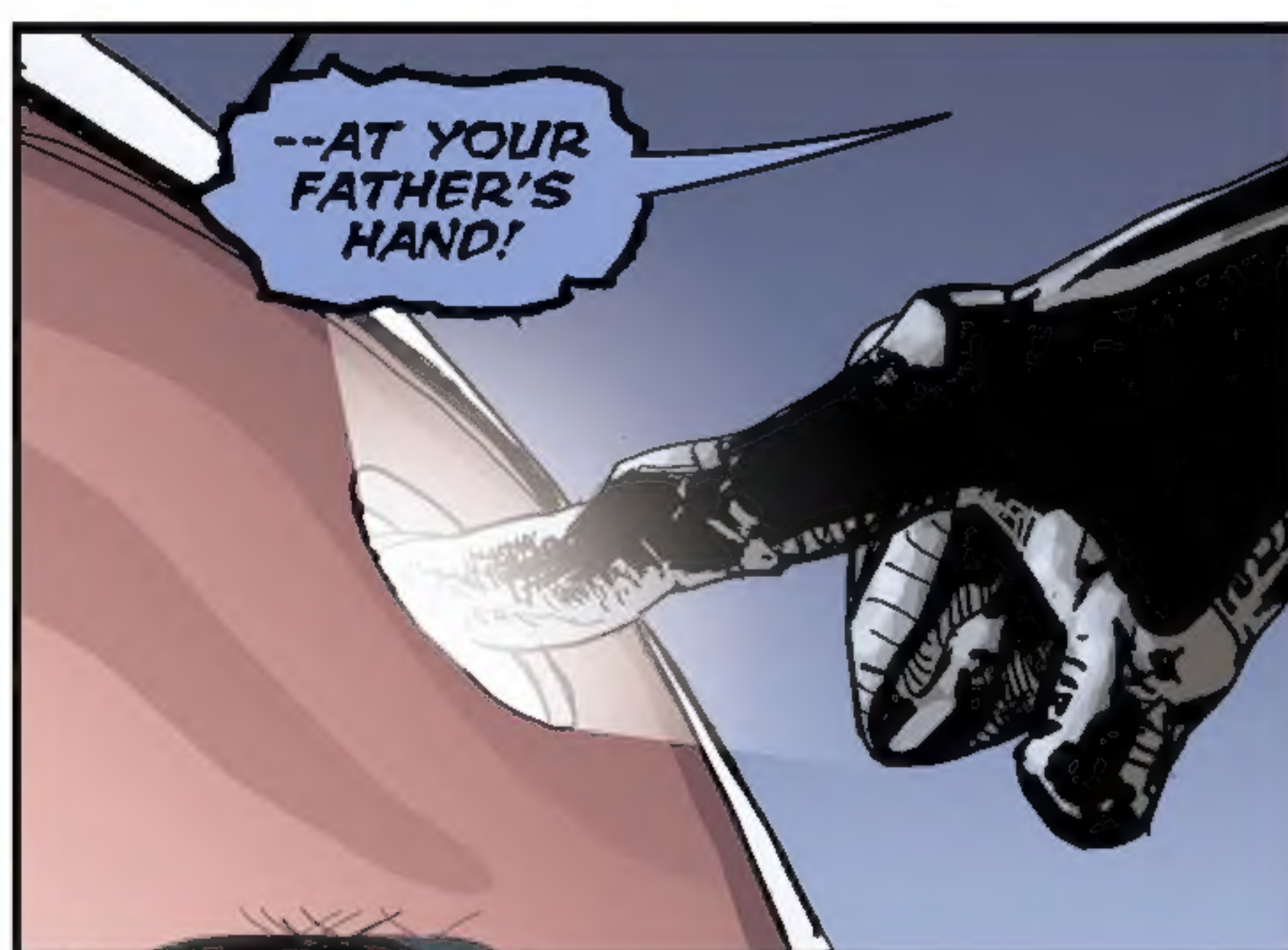
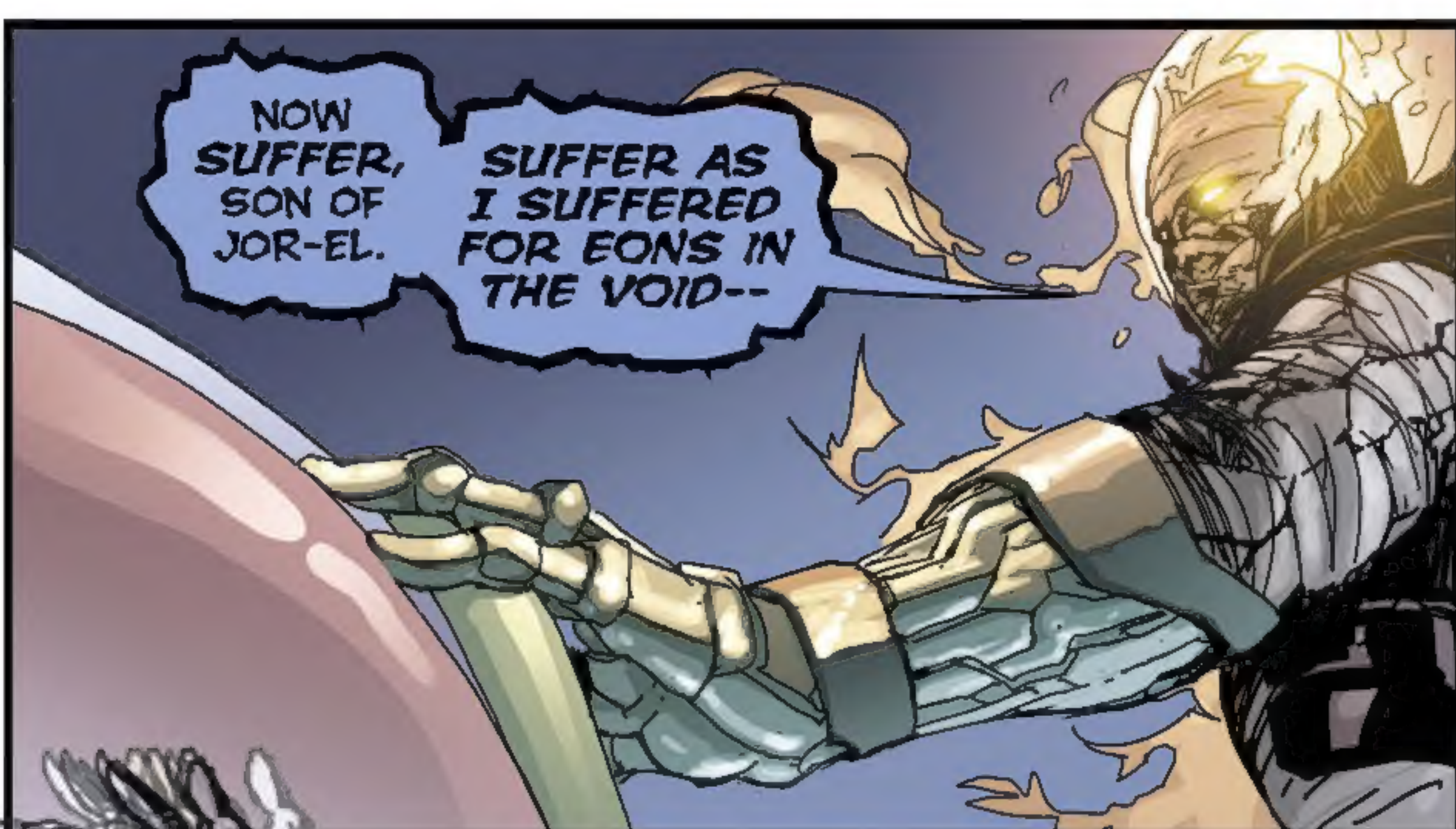


Prints.



The paw prints of a gigantic hound.







I DID IT!
I CAN SEE AND FEEL AND TOUCH!
AND THE SON OF JOR-EL HAS TAKEN XA-DU'S PLACE IN THE BITTER VOID!



THEY CALLED ME Ursa THE SHE-DEVIL!

I'M JAX-UR, WHO MURDERED THE MOON!

VAK-OX, MASTER OF MONSTERS!

I'M AK-VAR, THE WRONGLY ACCUSED!

RAS-KROM! BREAK MY CHAINS!

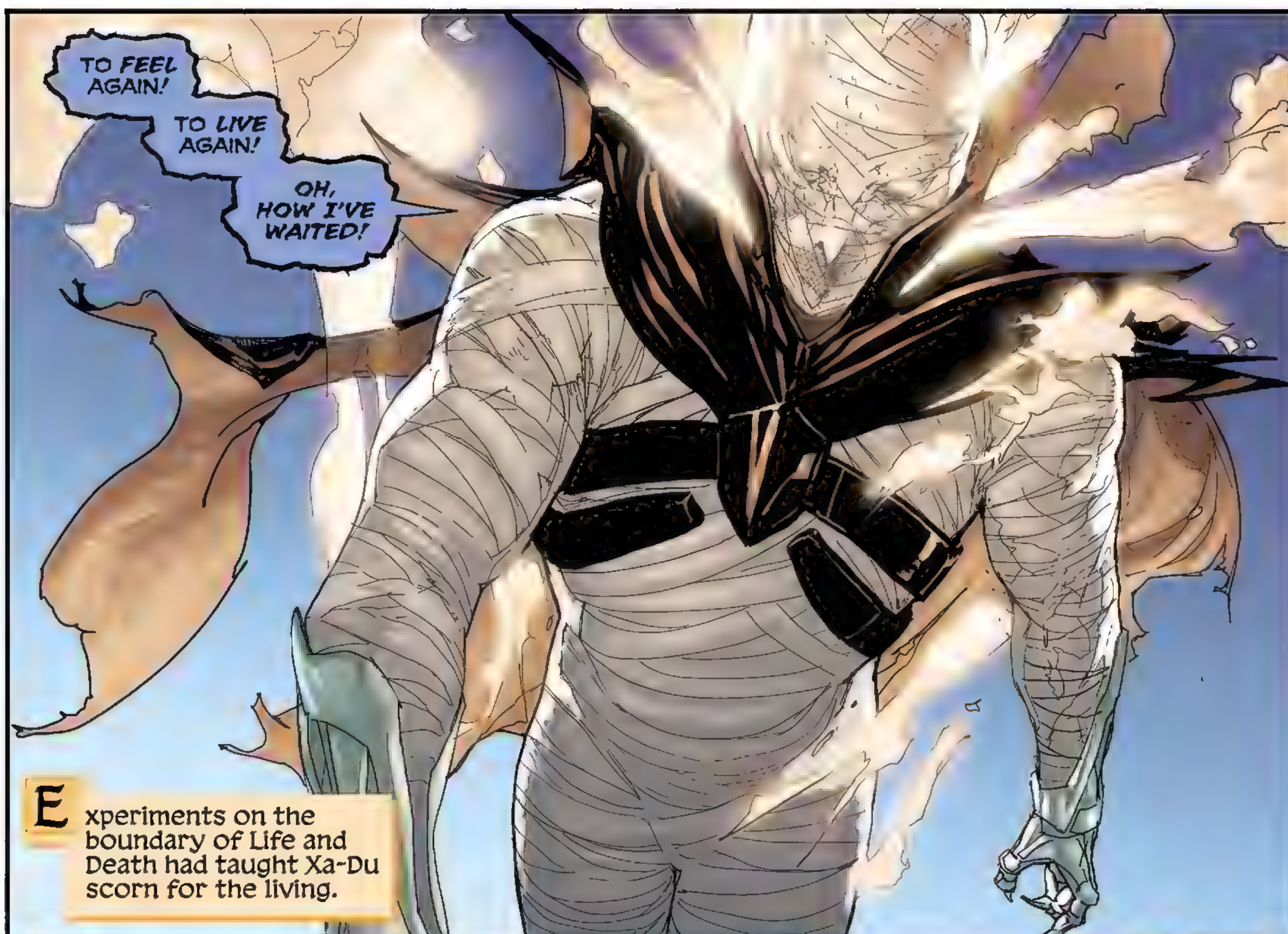
KNEEL!

NON HATE ALL!



KNEEL BEFORE

I'M IN THE PHANTOM ZONE.
BAD OUTCOME.



TO FEEL
AGAIN!

TO LIVE
AGAIN!

OH,
HOW I'VE
WAITED!

Experiments on the boundary of Life and Death had taught Xa-Du scorn for the living.

So that even the sight of the proud people of Kandor, frozen in their bottle, reduced to microscopic memorabilia--

--even these pitiful survivors aroused only Xa-Du's contempt.

His blue-hot
lust for cruelty
and command.

TINY
KRYPTONIANS,
IN A FORM OF
SUSPENDED
ANIMATION THAT'S
NEW TO ME.

VULNERABLE
TO THE LIVING
DEATH.

I'LL MAKE
SLAVES OF
THESE FIRST.

I'LL MAKE
AN ARMY OF
SUPER-ZOMBIES
TO BRING THIS
WORLD TO ITS
KNEES.

LET
US OUT,
XA-DU!

YOU
PROMISED.

Xa-Du ignored the distant accusations of betrayal, those voices heard in another room.

They were drowned out by an urgent buzz that drew the ghost king to a further chamber...

And there, in the light of ten thousand different screens, Xa-Du saw--

M'AIDEZ, SUPERMAN!

--TSUNAMI WAVES HITTING MALIBU--

¿DÓNDE ESTÁ SUPERMAN?!

TASUKETE!

A WHOLE WORLD.

A WORLD OF PEOPLE MADE OF BRITTLE GLASS AND SPLINTERS.

I AM FREE!

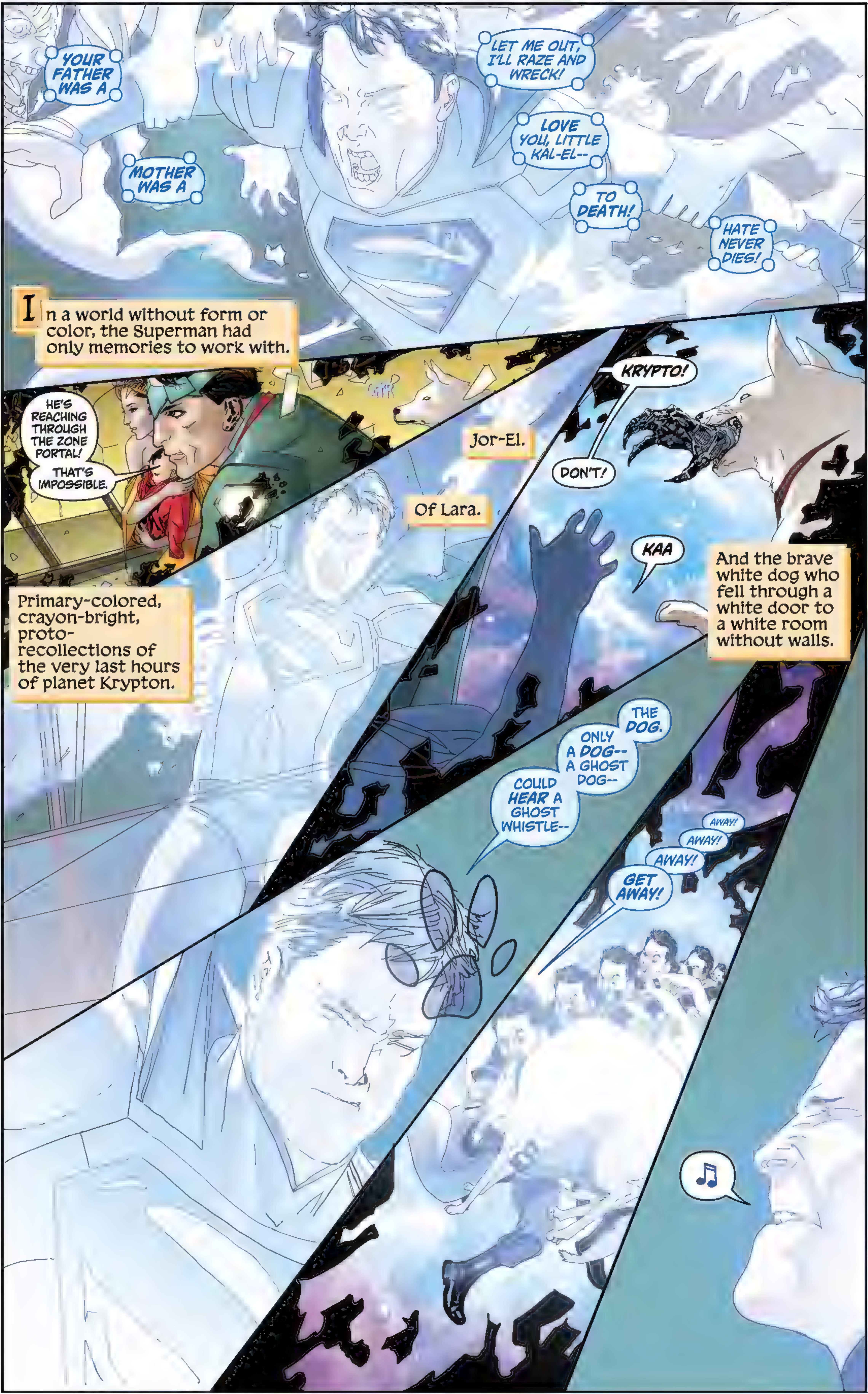
AND YOU!

YOU, JOR-EL, ARE DEAD!

KRYPTON IS DEAD AND XA-DU LIVES!

DO YOU HEAR ME, SON OF JOR-EL!

XA-DU LIVES!



YOUR FATHER WAS A

MOTHER WAS A

LET ME OUT, I'LL RAZE AND WRECK!

LOVE YOU, LITTLE KAL-EL--

TO DEATH!

HATE NEVER DIES!

In a world without form or color, the Superman had only memories to work with.

HE'S REACHING THROUGH THE ZONE PORTAL!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.

Jor-El.

Of Lara.

KRYPTO!

DON'T!

KAA

And the brave white dog who fell through a white door to a white room without walls.

Primary-colored, crayon-bright, proto-recollections of the very last hours of planet Krypton.

THE DOG.

ONLY A DOG-- A GHOST DOG--

COULD HEAR A GHOST WHISTLE--

AWAY!

AWAY!

AWAY!

GET AWAY!

♪



NGGH!
THAT
SOUND!



YOU CAN
SEE ME.
SO WHY
CAN'T I...



...SEE
YOU?

HA!
LOOKS
LIKE THERE'S
MORE TO THIS
PLACE--



--THAN
MEETS
THE EYE.

He should have known the
dog was never far away.



HE WAS
DEFENDING
YOU!

WHO
ARE YOU,
FRIEND?

A
STRANGER
HERE,
SUPERMAN.

IMPRISONED,
LIKE YOU, IN
BODILESS
LIMBO.



I WAS CALLED
TO A HAUNTING IN
METROPOLIS.

TRAPPED HERE--
ENSNARED BY SOME
KIND OF ECTO-
TECHNOLOGY I'VE
NEVER ENCOUNTERED
BEFORE.

A
HAUNTING,
YOU SAY?

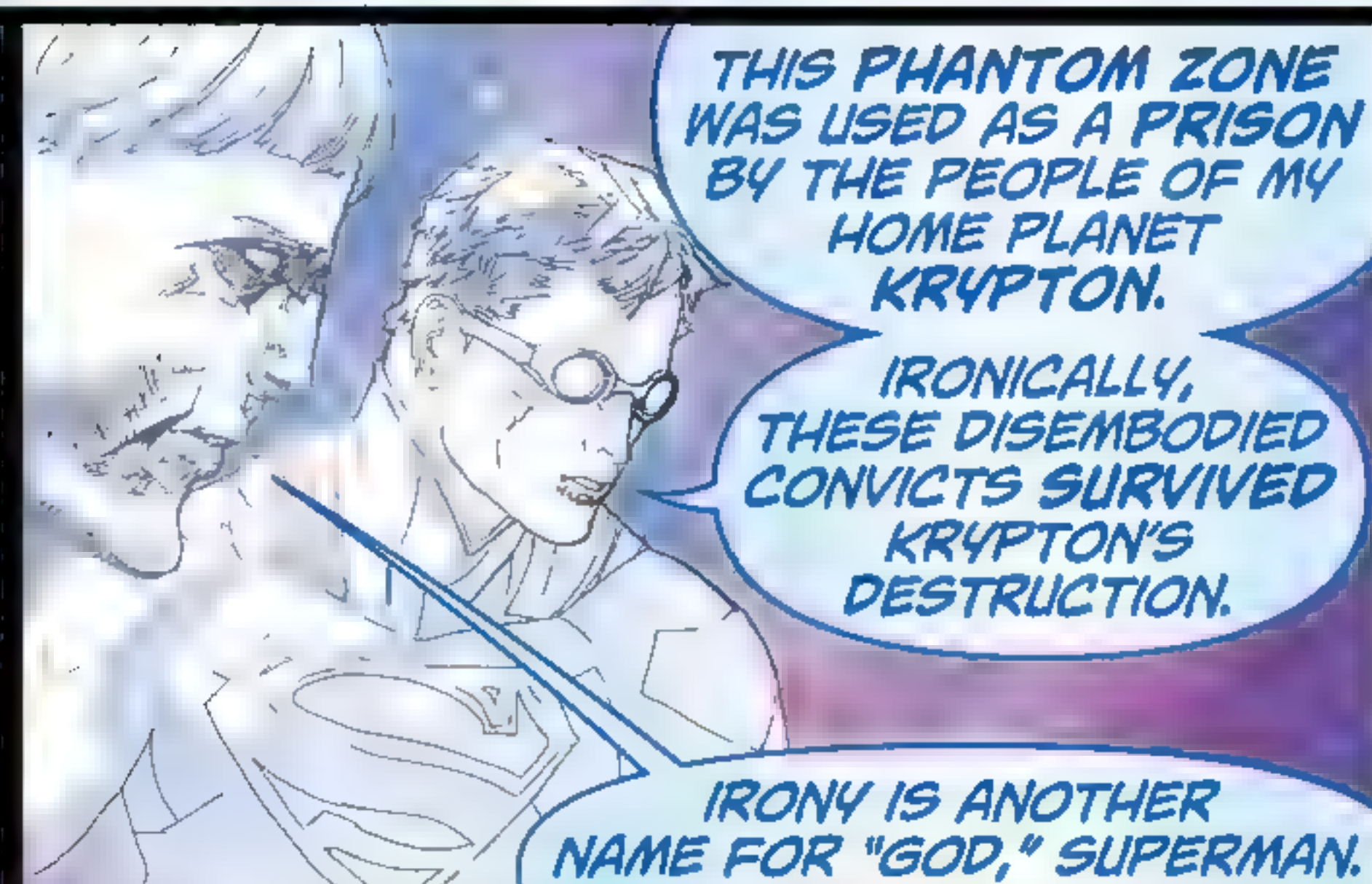
"ECTO-TECH-
NOLOGY"?

VOICES WERE
RECORDED IN AN
EMPTY ROOM--
SPEAKING NO EARTHLY
LANGUAGE.

VOICES OF
SCIENTISTS,
MANIACS, GHOSTS
OF A DEAD
PLANET.

BOASTING
HOW THEY'D FOUND
A WAY TO INVAD
AND CONQUER THE
WORLD OF THE
LIVING.

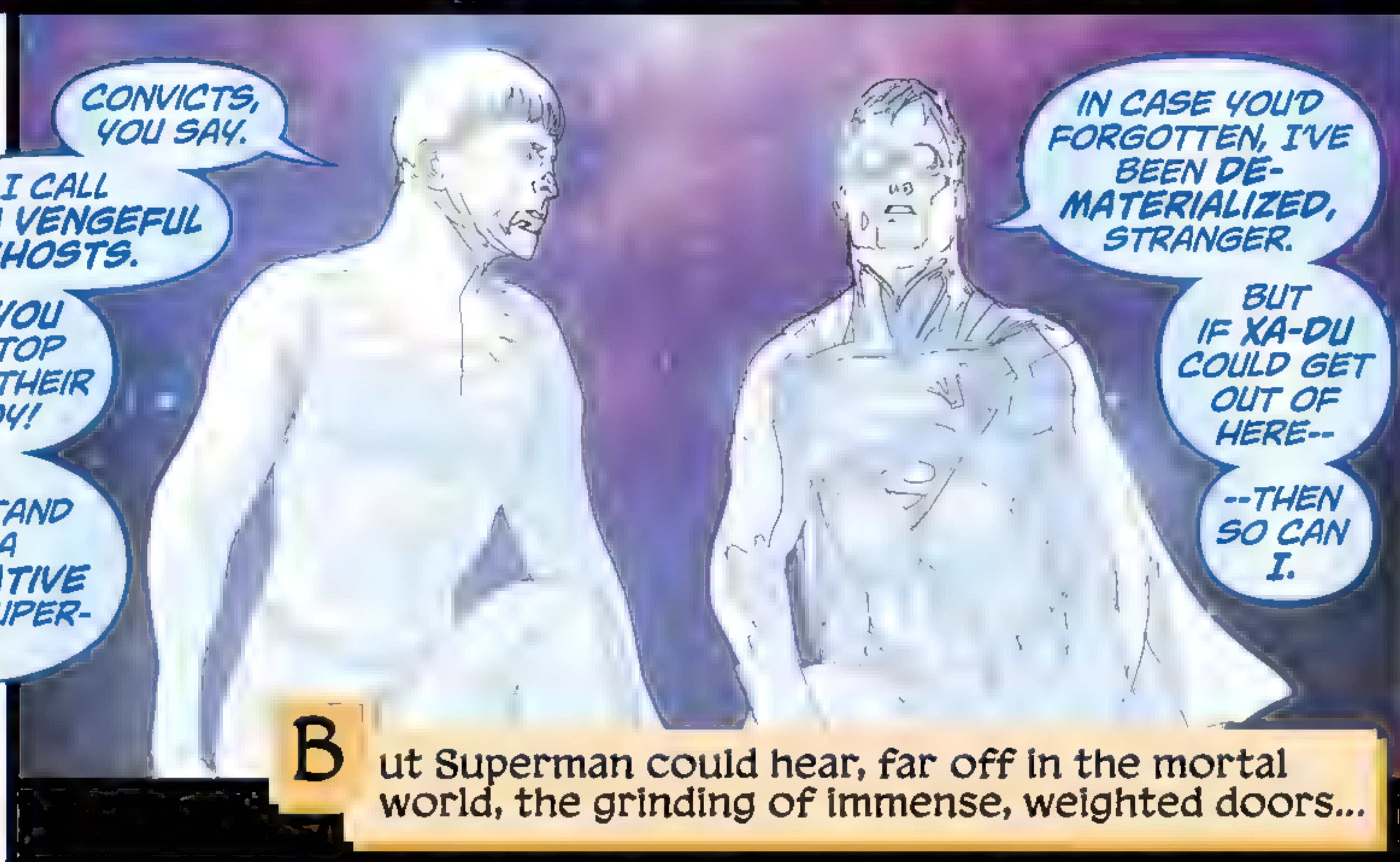
NOT
GHOSTS.



THIS PHANTOM ZONE
WAS USED AS A PRISON
BY THE PEOPLE OF MY
HOME PLANET
KRYPTON.

IRONICALLY,
THESE DISEMBODIED
CONVICTS SURVIVED
KRYPTON'S
DESTRUCTION.

IRONY IS ANOTHER
NAME FOR "GOD," SUPERMAN.



CONVICTS,
YOU SAY.

I CALL
THEM VENGEFUL
GHOSTS.

ONLY YOU
CAN STOP
XA-DU, THEIR
ENVOY!

NO ONE
ELSE CAN STAND
AGAINST A
KRYPTON NATIVE
WITH YOUR SUPER-
POWERS.

IN CASE YOU'D
FORGOTTEN, I'VE
BEEN DE-
MATERIALIZED,
STRANGER.

BUT
IF XA-DU
COULD GET
OUT OF
HERE--

--THEN
SO CAN
I.

But Superman could hear, far off in the mortal world, the grinding of immense, weighted doors...



And he knew that time, as ever, was in short supply.

AHHHH



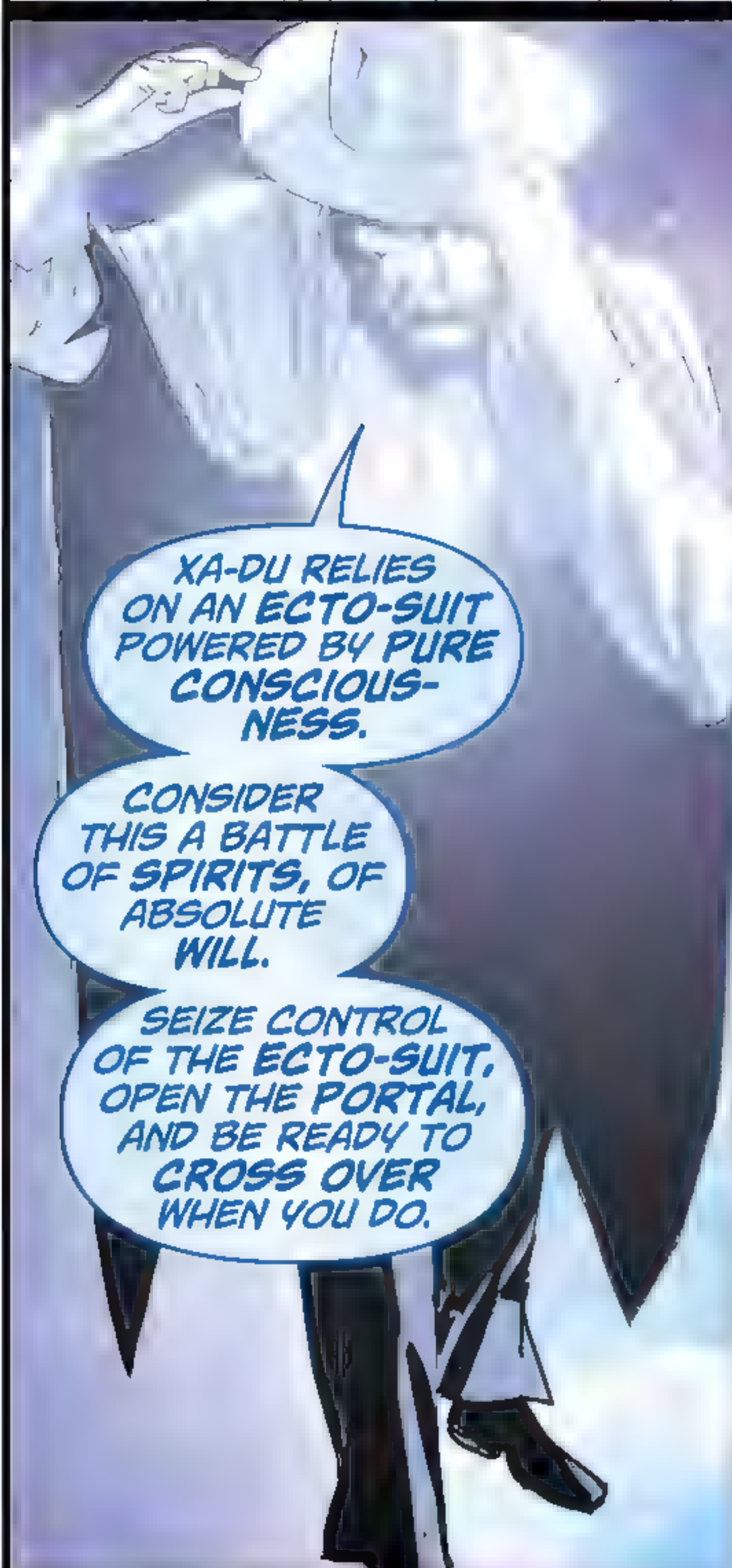
THIS
WORLD.
SO
WEAK.
SO
VULNERABLE.



THIS
ENABLES ME
TO MAKE MY
OWN ESCAPE,
BUT YOU--

THERE'S
ONLY ONE
WAY TO STOP
XA-DU NOW.

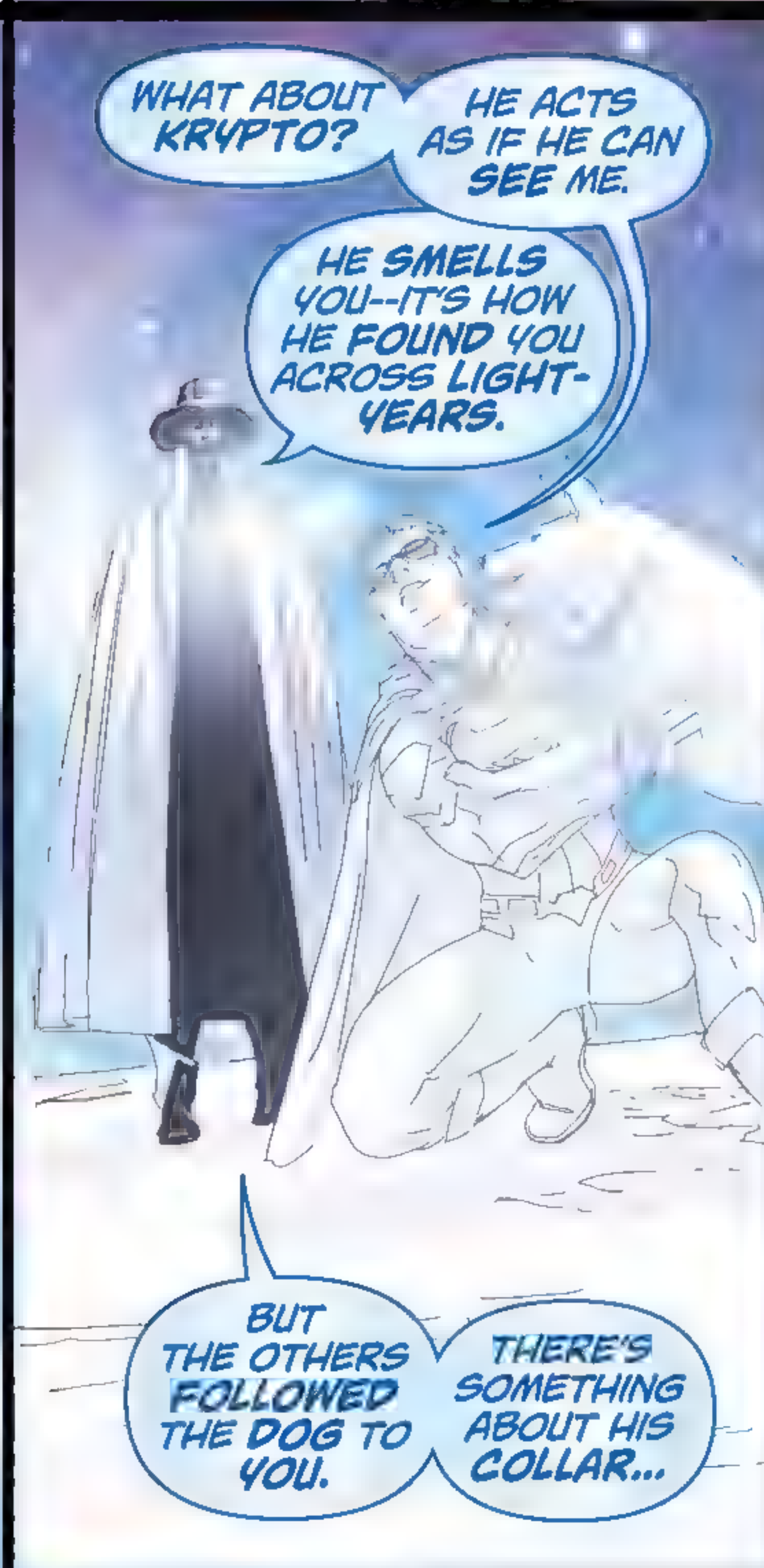
CLOTHES
MAKE THE
MAN, THEY
SAY.



XA-DU RELIES
ON AN ECTO-SUIT
POWERED BY PURE
CONSCIOUS-
NESS.

CONSIDER
THIS A BATTLE
OF SPIRITS, OF
ABSOLUTE
WILL.

SEIZE CONTROL
OF THE ECTO-SUIT,
OPEN THE PORTAL,
AND BE READY TO
CROSS OVER
WHEN YOU DO.



WHAT ABOUT
KRYPTO?

HE ACTS
AS IF HE CAN
SEE ME.

HE SMELLS
YOU--IT'S HOW
HE FOUND YOU
ACROSS LIGHT-
YEARS.

BUT
THE OTHERS
FOLLOWED
THE DOG TO
YOU.

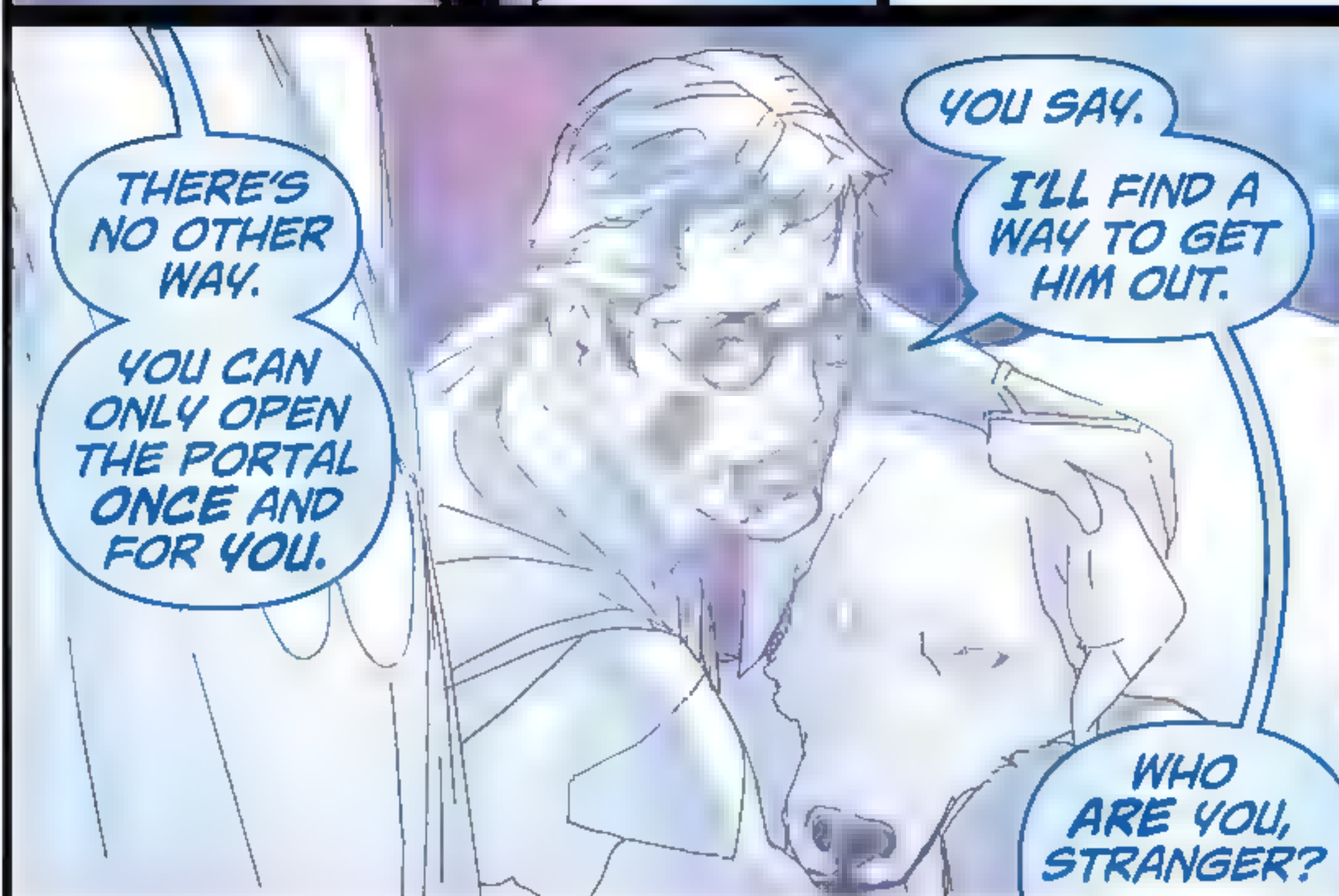
THERE'S
SOMETHING
ABOUT HIS
COLLAR...



HE WAS
MY FATHER'S
DOG--HE ALWAYS
HATED HIS
COLLAR.

HE
PROMISED TO
PROTECT
ME.

I WON'T
JUST LEAVE
HIM HERE.



THERE'S
NO OTHER
WAY.

YOU CAN
ONLY OPEN
THE PORTAL
ONCE AND
FOR YOU.

YOU SAY.

I'LL FIND A
WAY TO GET
HIM OUT.

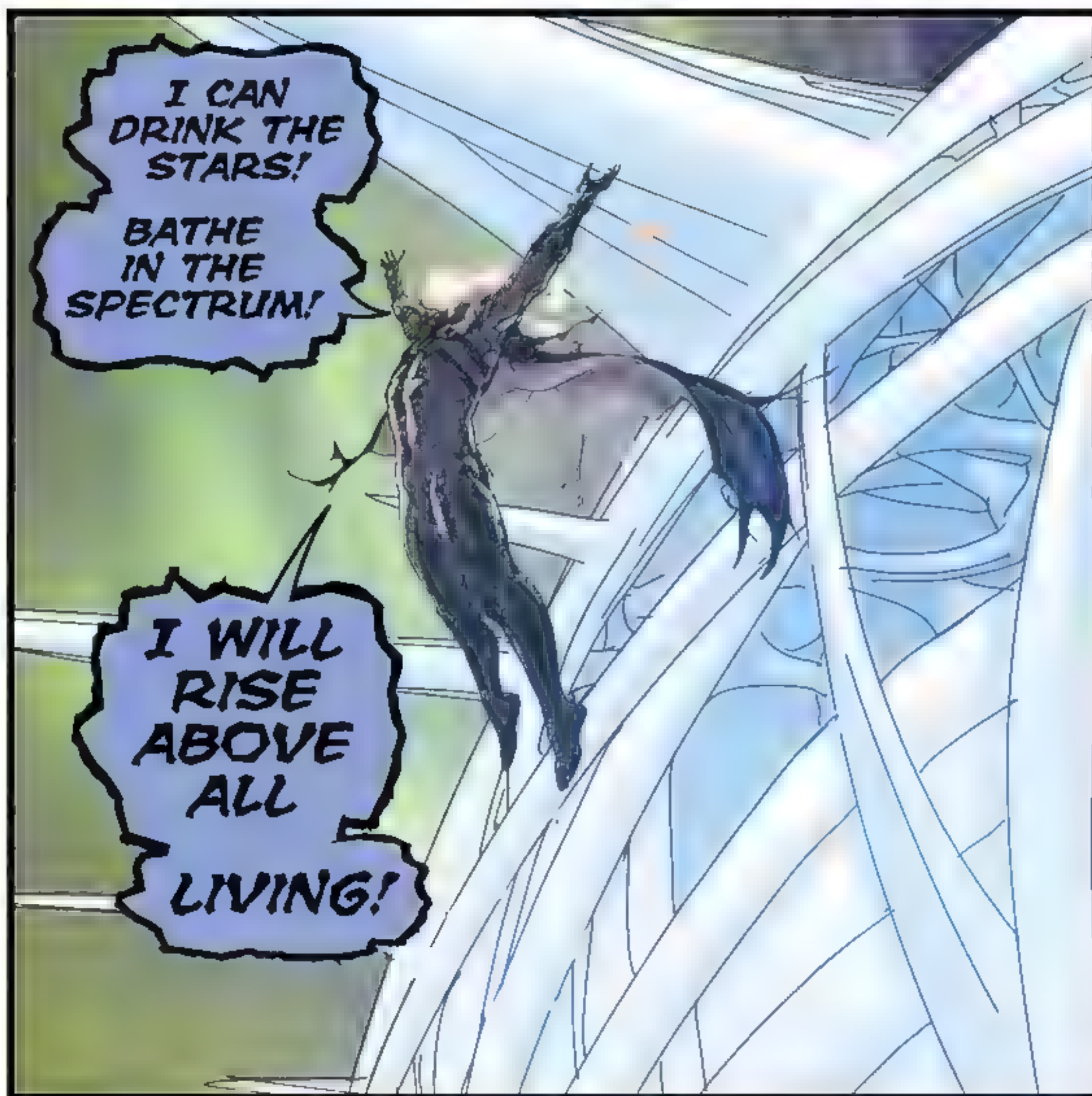
WHO
ARE YOU,
STRANGER?

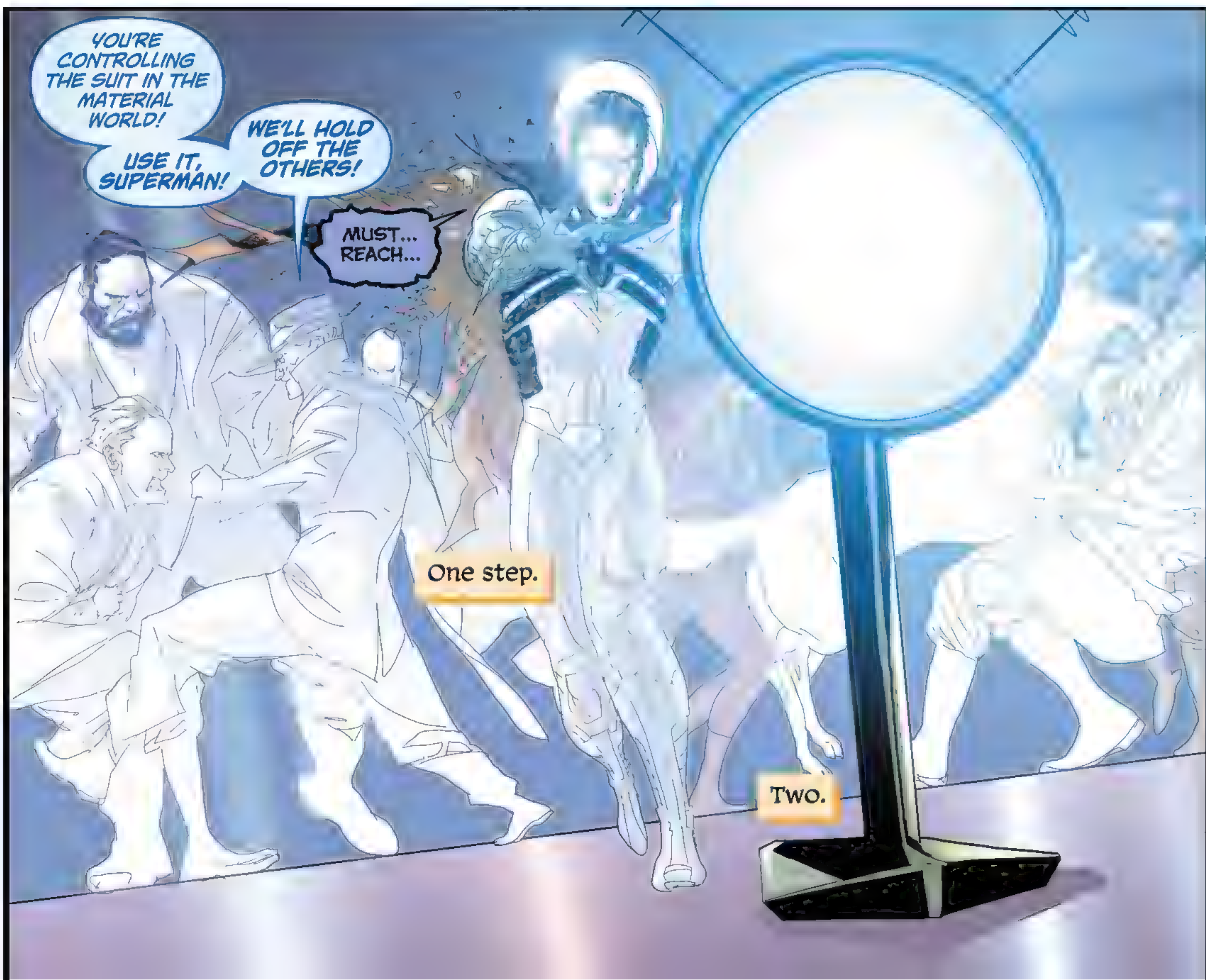
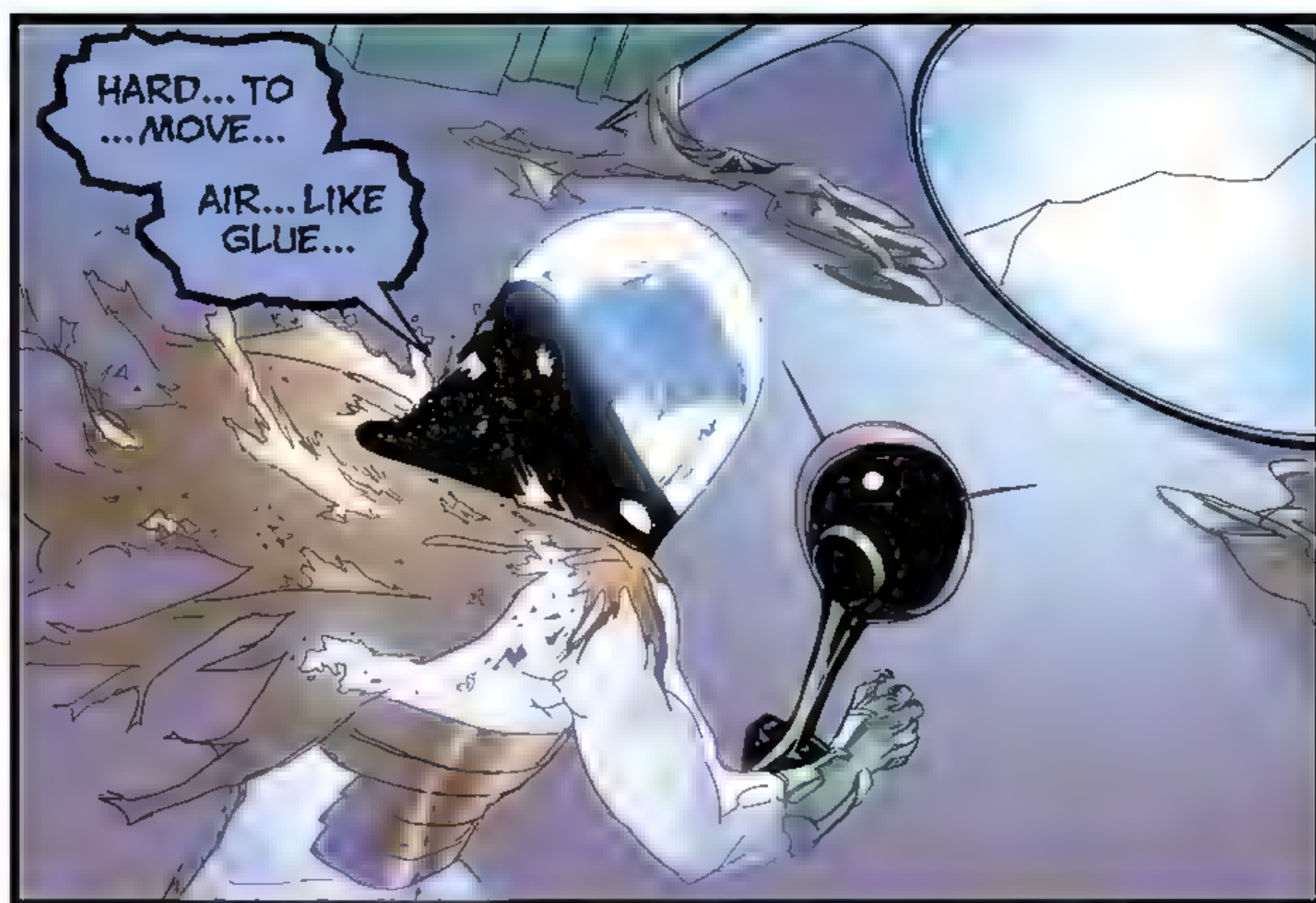


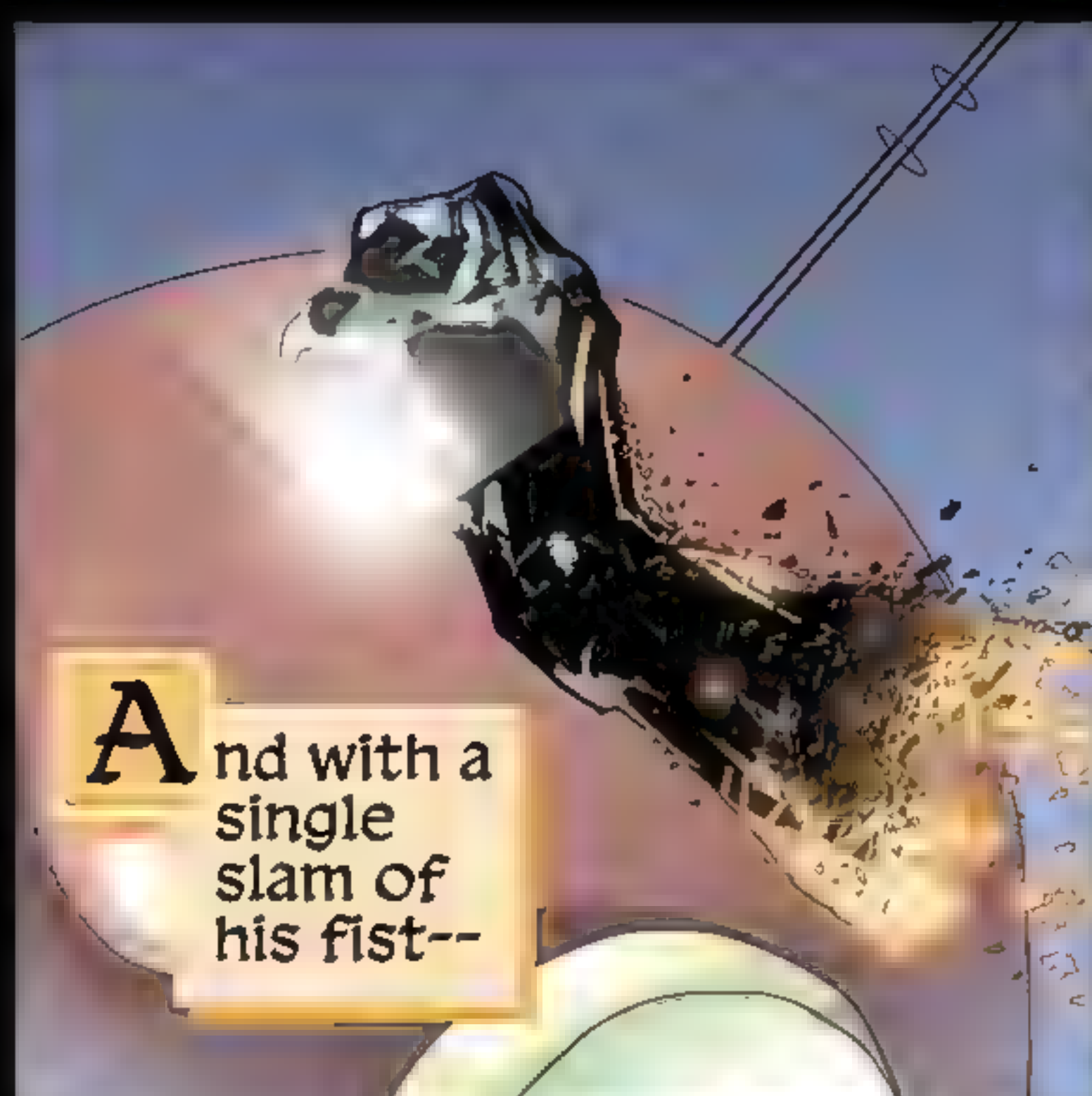
A FOOLISH MAN WHO
WALKS AN ENDLESS
ROAD; A MAN WHO
TOOK THE SILVER
AND BETRAYED
THE GOLD.

NOW I
TRY TO PUT
THINGS
RIGHT.

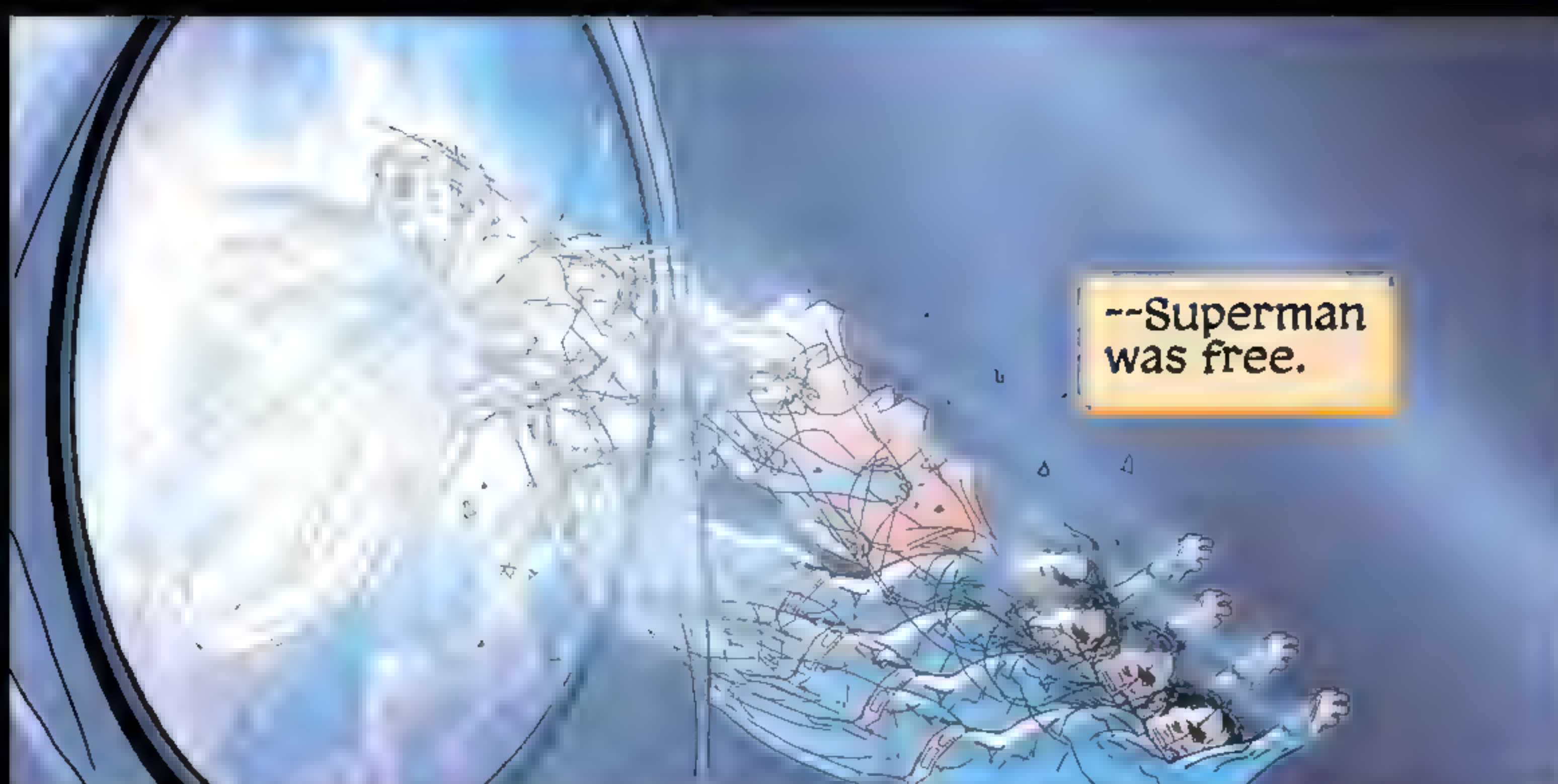
YOU MUST
GO, SUPERMAN--
XA-DU IS INSANE
AND THE WORLD IS
ILL-PREPARED.







And with a single slam of his fist--



--Superman was free.

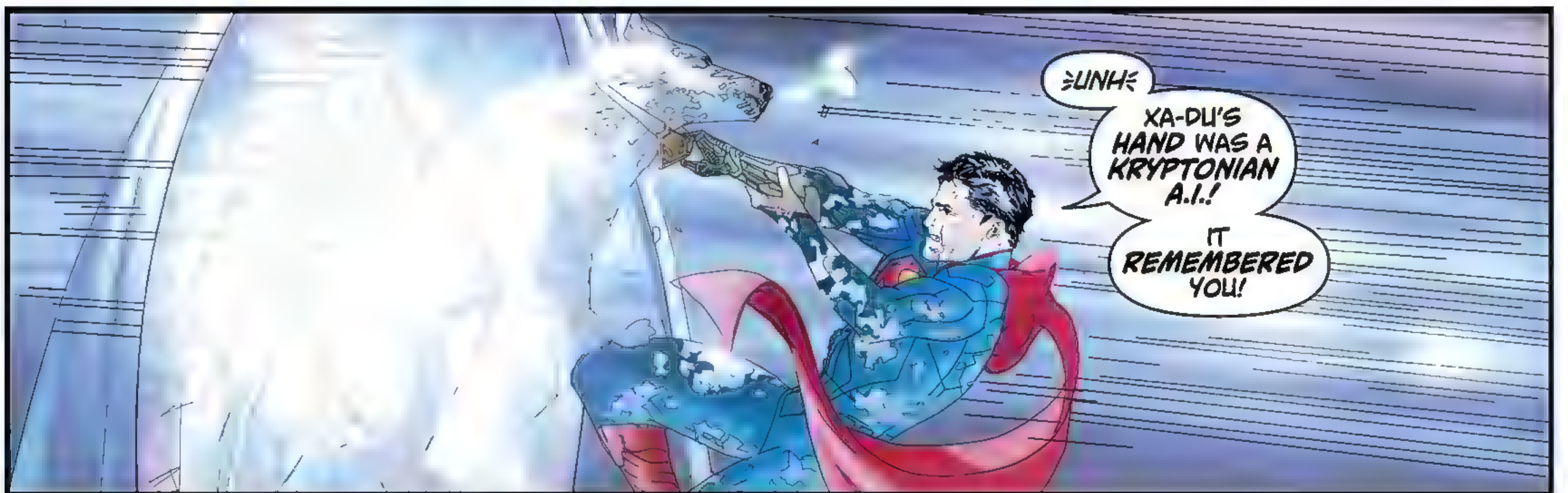


And so the ghost dog waited and waited--long after even the Stranger had gone.



Krypto waited and waited for what felt like a thousand years--for Kal-El, his Kal-El, had promised he would return.

And Kal-El
never broke
a promise...





...When the forces of darkness are never far away.



In fact--

--they had never been closer.

YOU WANT OUT OF HERE.



And each new day brought them closer still.

YOU WANT REVENGE.

SO LET'S YOU AND I DEAL.



NEXT: SUPERMAN'S MISSION TO MARS

SOME
THINGS ARE
THE SAME
NO MATTER
WHERE YOU
GO.

IT DOESN'T
MUCH MATTER
WHAT CITY
YOU'RE IN--

HELIX
INTERWEAVING 97%
COMPLETE.

--OR WHAT
YEAR IT IS--

THE
IMPRINTED
STRAND WILL
CREATE AN
UNBREAKABLE
BOND.

--OR WHETHER
THE SUNLIGHT
ON YOUR FACE
IS YELLOW,
ORANGE OR
RED.

HELIX
INTERWEAVING
COMPLETE.

SUCCESS?

WE SHALL
KNOW IN A
MOMENT,
DEAR.

ONCE UPON
A TIME...


KAAA!

RRRRRRRR

...THERE WAS
A BOY AND
HIS DOG.

A BOY AND HIS DOG

SHOLLY FISCH Writer BRAD WALKER Penciller
ANDREW HENNESSY Inker JAY DAVID RAMOS Colorist PATRICK BROSSEAU Letterer
WIL MOSS Associate Editor MATT IDELSON Editor
SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER



FROM THE START,
THE BOY AND THE
DOG WERE BEST
FRIENDS.

CONFIDANTS.

PARTNERS
IN CRIME.

THICK AS
THIEVES.

WHENEVER
THE TWO WERE
SEPARATED--

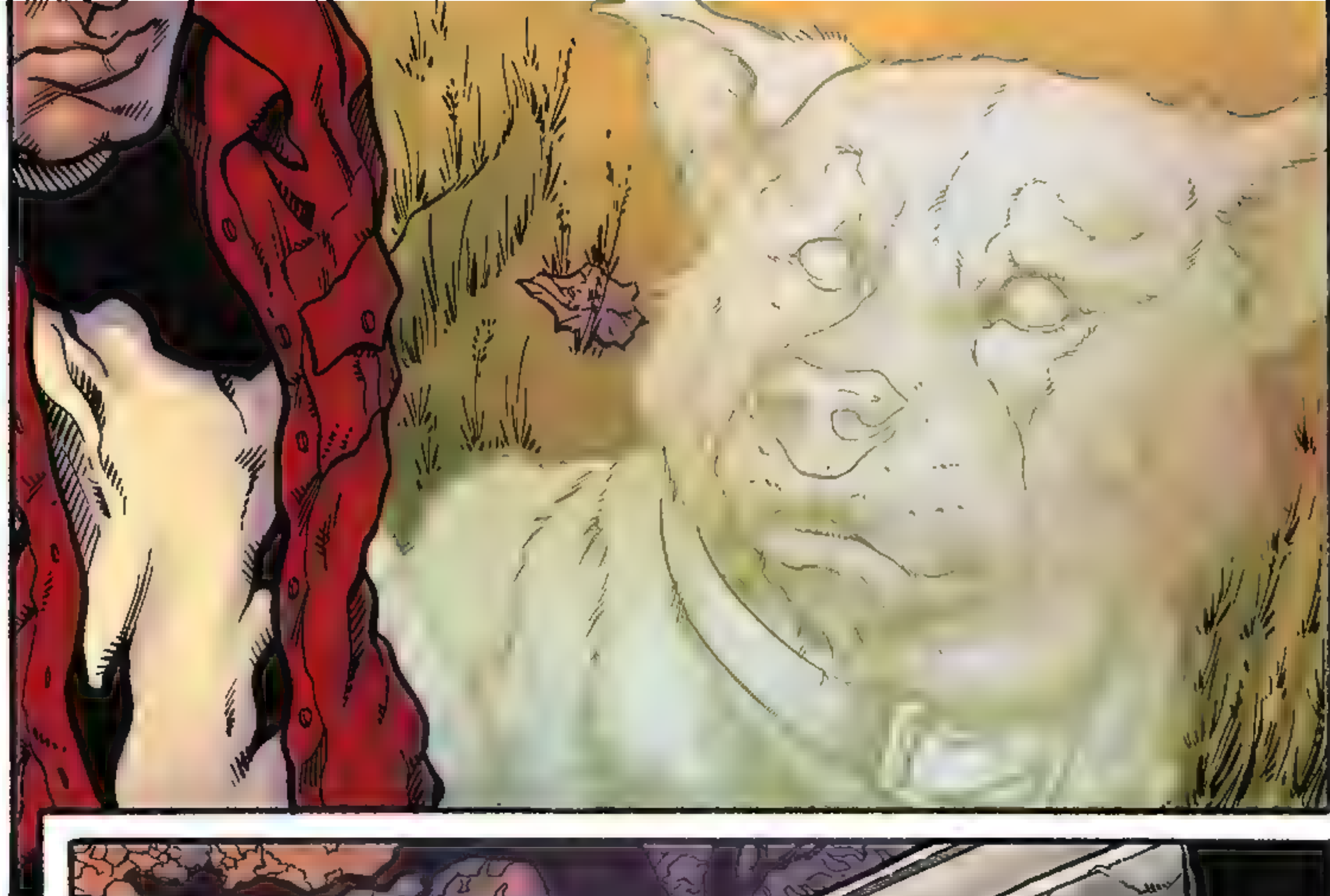
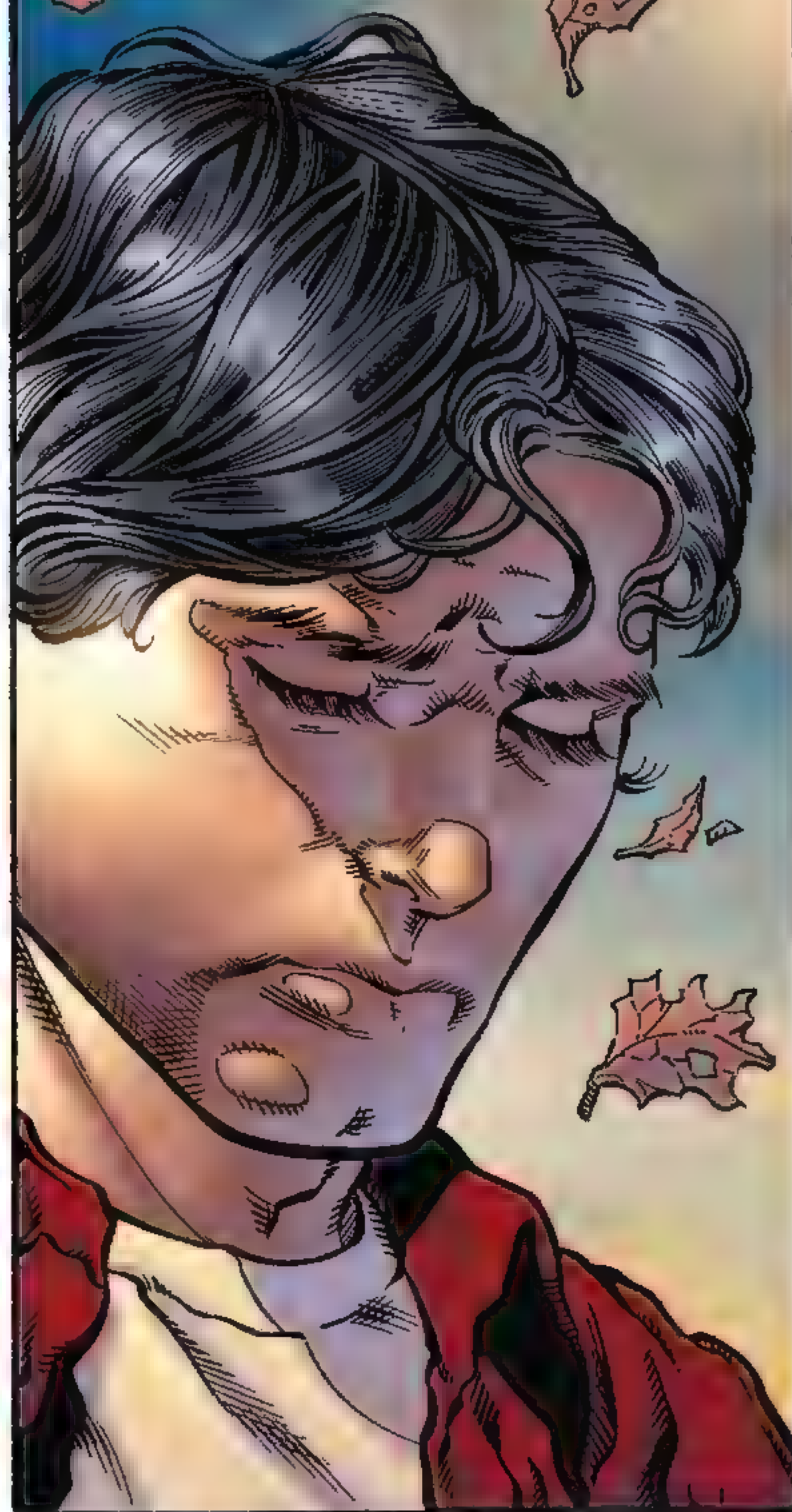
--THE DOG WOULD WAIT
FAITHFULLY FOR THE
BOY'S RETURN, HIS
NOSE PRESSED UP
AGAINST THE GLASS.



STILL,
WHEREVER THE
BOY WOULD GO--

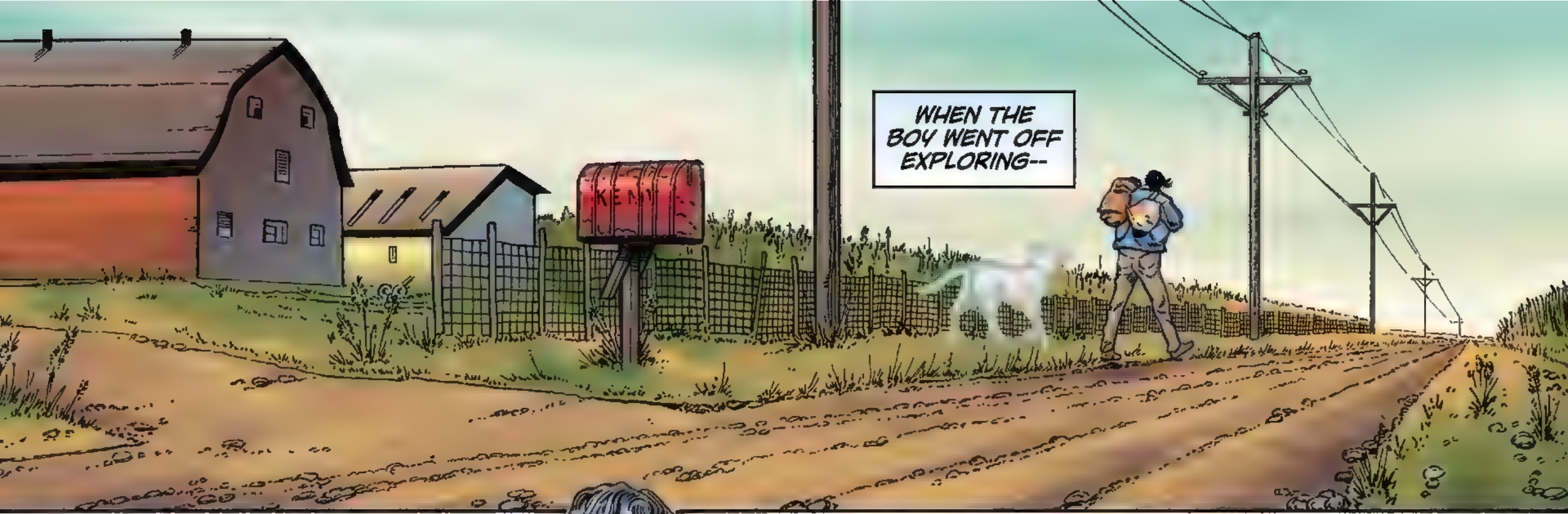
--THE
FAITHFUL
DOG WOULD
FOLLOW.

WHEN THE BOY
WAS FEELING LOW--



--THE
DOG WAS
THERE.



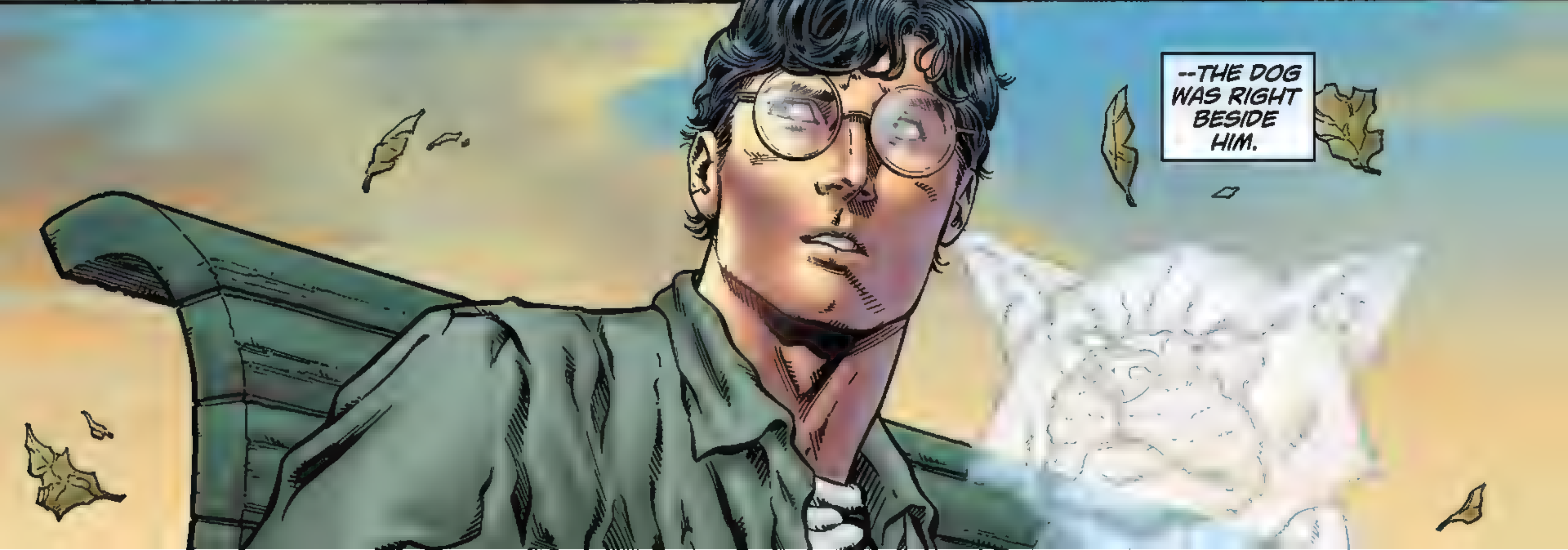


WHEN THE
BOY WENT OFF
EXPLORING--




THERE'S
A GHOST
WATCHING
OVER YOU.

THERE'S
A WHITE
DOG.



--THE DOG
WAS RIGHT
BESIDE
HIM.



AS THE BOY
GREW, EMBARKING
ON THE ADVENTURES
BOYS HAVE--

--THE DOG
WAS BY HIS
SIDE--

--DOING
HIS BEST--

--TO PROTECT
THE BOY FROM
HARM.



YET, IF THE DOG
COULD TALK, HE'D
TELL YOU THAT,
LATE AT NIGHT--



--WHEN
ALL WAS
STILL--



--AND THE WALLS
BETWEEN WORLDS
WERE AT THEIR
THINNEST--



--THAT WAS
THE TIME THE
DOG LOVED
THE BEST.

END

DESTINY LEAVES ITS MARK

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THE RETURN
OF THE
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THE PHANTOM STRANGER™

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THE RETURN OF THE PHANTOM KING!

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“Maniacally brilliant.”

– THE NEW YORK TIMES

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Two of the comics industry’s top creative talents, writer Grant Morrison and artist Frank Quitely, redefine the Man of Steel for a new generation.

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– ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

“Taking the Man of Steel back to his roots and into the future at the same time, ALL-STAR SUPERMAN is exciting, bold and supercool...all the makings of a classic.”

– VARIETY

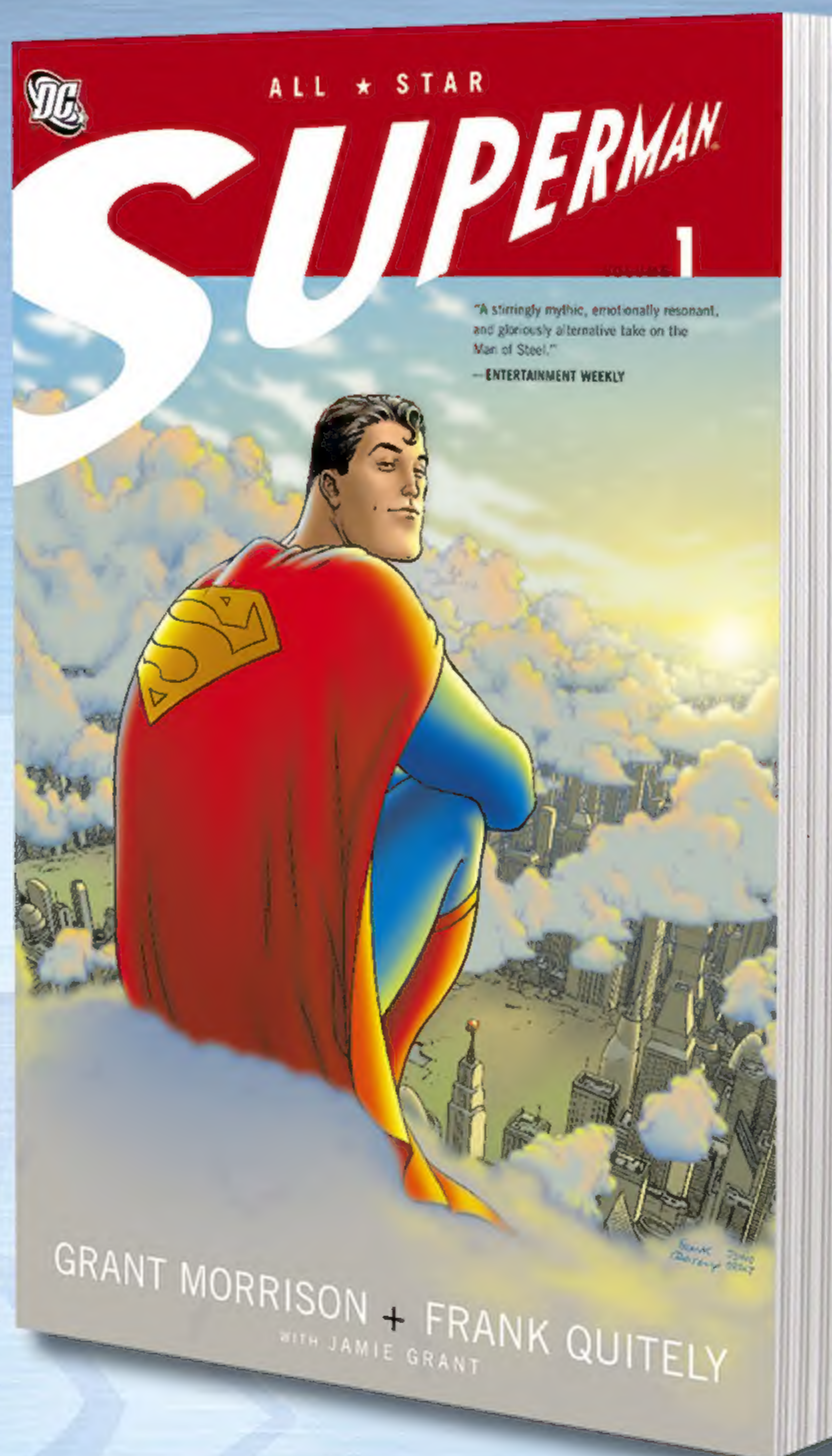
“The most enjoyable incarnation of Superman in almost 30 years...”

– THE ONION

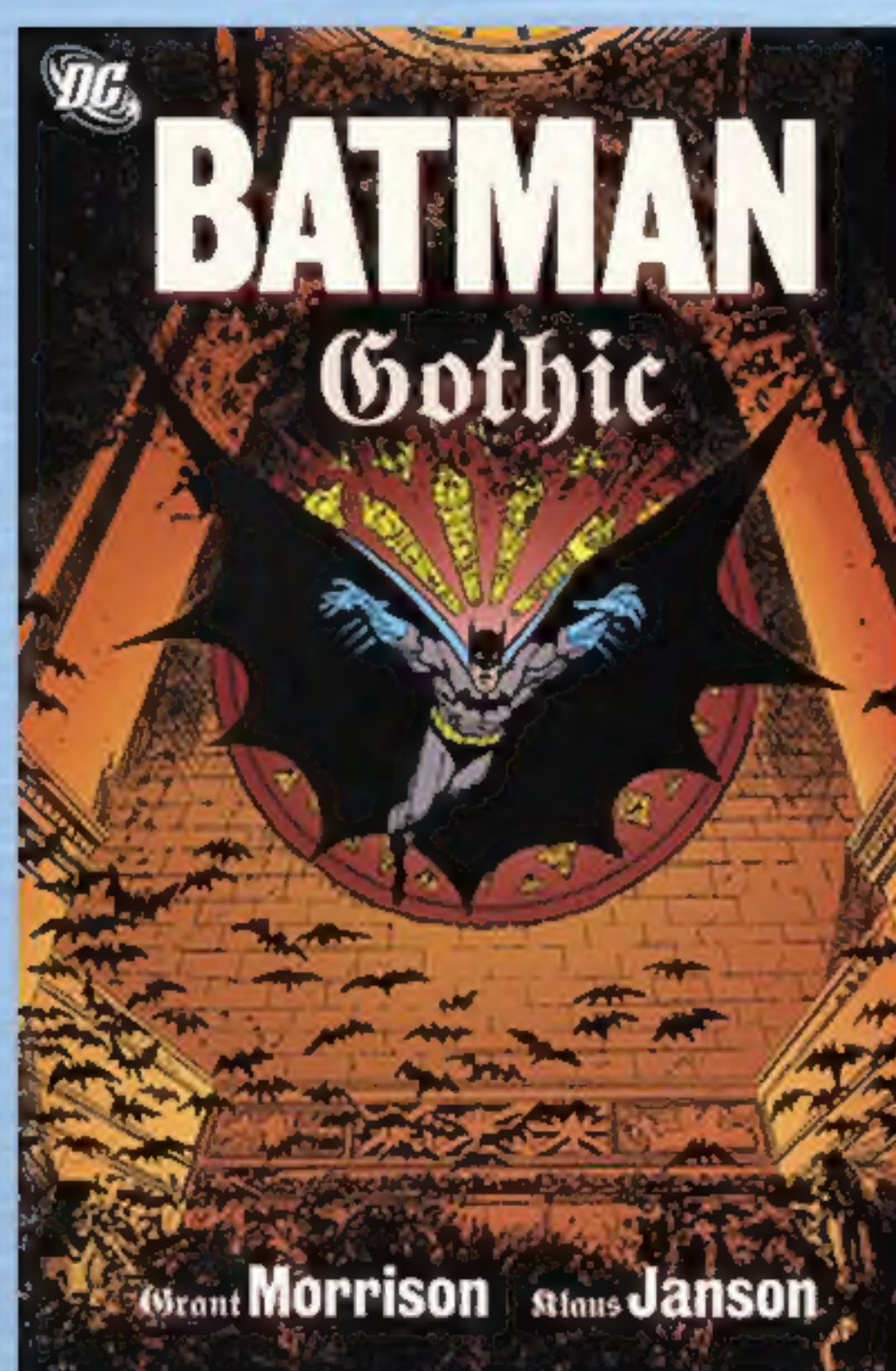
“Quitely’s finely detailed art style and Morrison’s sensationally cerebral and witty storytelling have taken this simple re-imagining of Superman’s life and made it a must-read series.”

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BATMAN:
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with
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